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The dialect of Fleet Street

By Roy Harris

KEITH WATERHOUSE:
Daily Mirror Style
111pp. Mirror Books. £3.50.
0859392465

Journalism is a subject on which Keith Waterhouse writes with the authority of thirty years in journalism. The particular dialect of journalism in which he specializes is Tabloid English. Tabloid English (TE for short), although those who deprecate it may be reluctant to admit the fact, is quite a difficult dialect to master. For example, my groping attempt to translate the first three sentences of this paragraph into TE came out as follows: "If anyone can tell Fleet Street how to dot its i's and cross its t's, it has to be 30-year-veteran journalist Keith Waterhouse. Wordmongering for the tabloids is Keith's thing. And you eggheads can scoff, but churning out this really readable stuff is no picnic." Clearly, that would not get me a job reviewing for the *Mirror*. Within the space of three sentences, the style already has too many inconsistencies and false notes. The authentic accent of TE is missing.

The mistaken idea that TE is facile English comes from the fact that certain tabloid features are easily parodied. But so too are certain characteristics of Cockney. That does not mean that Cockney is a sloppy version of BBC newscasters' English. Nor does it mean that the parodist could speak genuine Cockney if he were, but chooses not to. To think he could is to fall victim to the same kind of mistake which Galsworthy perpetrated by having the servants in his plays drop their h's in the drawing-room with wooden regularity. The Galsworthy should not be singled out for this incompetence. Very few dramatists this century have had anything like a sensitive ear to the interplay of varieties of spoken English. (Perhaps the only one of those few who is still writing is Wesker.) The boys stage Americans whom theatre audiences tolerate bear further witness to our willingness to treat English as all much the same, but for superficially different top dressing. It

is another facet of the same oversimplification of language which dismisses journalism as just "bad English" marked by a few easily identified features of vocabulary and syntax. Even if journalism is "bad" in some way, it is far from clear that it makes much sense to call it "bad English". But in any case, there is much more to journalism than its crudely mockable mannerisms.

Waterhouse's book is not principally about the horrors of TE. On the contrary, it is a book about how to write TE well. It is a pity that few undergraduates studying English will ever be encouraged to read it by their tutors and lecturers. For this is a book from which students of English language and literature might learn a great deal, and certainly a great deal more than they are likely to learn from obscure debates about structuralism in the fens. Any enlightened university English syllabus would include Waterhouse as a compulsory text. In case that seems an extravagant proposal, let me give three reasons why it should be taken seriously.

First of all, Waterhouse does not present anything as pretentious as an analysis of TE, but something which is far more valuable: the first-hand evidence of the practitioner addressing himself to fellow practitioners. His primer was originally intended solely for internal circulation to the *Mirror* staff, and has in consequence a directness, professionalism and practicality which are rarely found in books on how to write. Here we see how the qualities and problems of TE present themselves to an articulate journalist who can reflect dispassionately on what he is doing with language and why. Very few poets or novelists have had this ability: they are too caught up in the web of words themselves. Fewer still of the self-appointed pundits who publish guides to "good English" have managed to escape the brainwashing process built into English education, which equates good English with the obsolete literary English found in conventional canonical works of major authors. Waterhouse is a delight because he is unbrainwashed and unrepentant. He is not ashamed of TE. He offers no

question-begging apology for writing it. For he understands what he is doing, and knows it can be good.

It is difficult not to concede to Waterhouse that TE needs no apology, when he can quote passages from the *Mirror* like the following:

Almost all of Norman Scott's adult life has been dedicated to one purpose: to prove that his story about Jeremy Thorpe was true.

Wherever the Liberal chief turned throughout the extraordinary saga, he was confronted by the brooding obsession of his accuser. For the past two years Scott has conducted his campaign from his isolated home near Chalfont on the edge of Dartmoor. He makes his living schooling horses and giving dressage lessons.

He has continued to insist that he is concerned only that the truth should come out.

But his crusade has looked more and more like a vendetta against the man he blames for years of misery.

All there could be here for the most fastidious cliché-hunter to turn up his nose at is *saga*, *crusade* and perhaps *brooding*. The rest is hard to find fault with. Nor can it be objected that the Thorpe story catches the *Mirror* in an unwelcome serious mood. True, the Thorpe story is not the Monte Carlo rally. But there is language for sombre topics and language for light ones. What the *Mirror* could never be accused of is manufacturing a colourless prose-for-all-purposes, as the more prestigious "heavies" of the breakfast table come close to doing.

A second reason why half-an-hour with Waterhouse is worth a whole term's undergraduate lectures is that Waterhouse writes about modern English with a genuine sense of historical perspective. That is not at all the same as a historian's perspective. A historian's perspective is the one thing quite sure to kill most undergraduates' incipient interest in language since dead. (Unfortunately, it is the philological historians who write most of the text books inflicted upon language students; with the result that

by the end of their first week of "philology" the majority of students have reached the conclusion that linguistic studies are of purely antiquarian interest.)

Waterhouse rightly sees 1934 as a landmark in the history of modern English. It was the year in which TE first appeared. Furthermore, Waterhouse testifies that TE was not born, but invented. Now the very fact that the development of a major national language can be deliberately manipulated by a small group of determined language-planners is a truth so

unpalatable to certain academic linguists that instinctively they will either deny it or seek to minimize its significance. That is why 1934 is not likely to be recognized as a key date in any of the academic histories of the English language published this century. But it was, all the same. It is no use pretending that what happened to English then was something confined to the printed columns of the *Mirror*, or later of its rivals. It was not just a short-lived "stylized" aberration, localized in Fleet Street. For when, half a century later, a television newscaster can solemnly announce to the world, "Good evening. The dollar takes a pounding," or comment on delays in launching the US space shuttle, "The future is running a little late today," then he is speaking undiluted TE, whether he realizes it or not. What is more, he is speaking it with that carefully measured enunciation, contrived to fudge the difference between reading and talking, which makes it a shop-window model for contemporary spoken English. Oral TE is no longer confined to the media men. The other day I heard a distinctly non-public-school youth sum up the prospects of a local football team in TE of exquisite purity: "They'll get slammed, old chap." (As Waterhouse acutely observes, the tabloids are the last refuge of ageing upper-class slang.)

A third reason why what Waterhouse says would repay serious consideration is this. Unlike most academics at present engaged in linguistic studies, he does not treat "the language" as an abstract set of rules

leading its own independent existence, irrespective of whether in day-to-day practice people observe the rules or not. Waterhouse has an intuitive grasp of the fact that we create language as we go, just as we create our other social, political and artistic patterns of activity. That is ultimately why, for Waterhouse, language is important. It matters what we do with it. It is our responsibility. We cannot evade that responsibility by putting the blame on "them" or "the system", or "what the public wants".

As one might expect, *Daily Mirror* Style is refreshingly free from the "letters to the Times" variety of nonsense about British English. It does not fulminate pointlessly against the importation of useful Americanisms like *hopefully*. Nor, at the other extreme, does it deplore alleged lacunae in the language and propose avant-garde improvements such as *unisex* pronouns. It is a book which is not slow to point out the verbal rust-spots in TE's own vocabulary: *axe*, *bonanza*, *bid*, *cheeky*, *clamdowner*, *dashing*, *hammered*, *miracle*, *rapped*, *spree*, *tragedy*, and many more.

What I think Waterhouse underestimates is the extent to which TE originally represented and crystallized a genuinely popular breakthrough in the social psychology of written English. Paradoxically, the underestimation does him credit. For he was one of the engineers who put the new linguistic technology into successful practice. It was never merely a lexical face-lift to the language. There is no such thing. Syntactic surgery was involved too. Thus I believe that Waterhouse is unduly cautious to take the view that in cutting out superfluous grammatical props (articles, auxiliaries, connectives) TE went beyond what was sanctioned by everyday syntax. What TE did was to systematize the streamlining. It effected a shift in emphasis from the linear structure of the English sentence (sacrosanct to those educationalists who were baptized in the faith that every sentence by definition must "make complete sense") to its semantic nuclei. But that merely legitimized a trend gathering momen-

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turn in popular English usage throughout the twentieth century. For generations now, the basic interrogative has been simply: "Seen Bert?" The more ceremonious "Have you seen Bert?" comes out only on Sunday. Moreover, being a marked form, the latter tends increasingly to be reserved for a different meaning: it does not merely inquire, but challenges the addressee.

Likewise, *pace* Waterhouse, failure to insert unwanted definite and indefinite articles is a spontaneous feature of everyday speech. We did not need tabloid headlines to teach us how to do it. Anyone whose ears have not been educated into atrophy can hear TE phraseology all around him. A pub conversation begins: "Cold wind again, Jim." A shop assistant explaining her badinage to a sympathetic inquirer says: "Finger scratched. Bloody cat." A passer-by comes up to me as I am about to drive away from a parking meter and says not—as he might well have done in some Edwardian novel if there had been parking meters in Edwardian novels—"Excuse me, but do you know that the boot of your car is not properly shut?" but simply, effectively, and quite unhesitatingly, "Boot's open."

When Waterhouse says that TE was "designed to accommodate the largest type to the smallest page" he puts his finger on the relevant material circumstance, but not on the underlying conditions which made that accommodation a communicational success. Nor can modern linguistic theorists do any better by invoking the operation of "deletion transformations" and similarly impressive-sounding pieces of grammatical machinery. If they do, they are missing the point. It would be rather like supposing one had accounted for the miniskirt by describing it as a cut-down version of the longer skirts that were previously in fashion. What this "explanation" fails to come to terms with is the simple fact that the miniskirt is not a substitute for anything else: it is a garment in its own right.

The essence of the tabloid revolution in English prose was to introduce not merely a new readability, but a radically innovative concept of expression. It was a revolution based on lexically nuclear syntax. What that means can best be appreciated by considering for a moment the kind of sentence that was normal in the newspapers of the early years of the century. This is how the *Daily Graphic* reported Blériot's epoch-making flight in 1909:

At such an express pace did the monoplane travel through the air across the Channel that very few minutes had elapsed from the notification of the start before the marvellous machine was sighted by the few who were keeping a keen look-out for it on Dover cliffs.

Here the reader has no choice but to take a deep breath and plunge into a sentential labyrinth of forty-odd words and three subordinate clauses. The TE revolution changed all that. Sentences without verbs? Why not? Plenty of them in everyday speech. But above all, words the eye and mind can make sense of at a glance, without being called upon to perform a feat of computation. Meanings first, and let the sentences look after themselves.

Having grasped this basic point about TE, we are in a position to analyse two conspicuous features of tabloid style which Waterhouse comments on and deplores, but without ever fully seeing their internal linguistic logic. One is the attributive queue (*Fun-loving, former night-club owner Fred Slagter*), and the other is the persistent prominence of the pun-at-all-costs policy (*The writing*).

on the wall for FBI fingerprint experts...). The attributive queue is the natural consequence of economizing on dependent clauses and connectives. The real objection to it is not that through constant repetition it becomes monotonous, but rather that it defeats the principles underlying TE when the queue gets so long as to hold up the reader's word-processing.

The more fascinating case is the systematic abuse of the pun, which Waterhouse condemns as "facetiousness". But examination of the copious examples he quotes reveals that there is much more of linguistic interest here than merely overtired Fleet Street humour. In TE the thematic pun becomes a semantic substitute for syntax. It signposts the narrative structure of a brief story more clearly than any other verbal device known to literature man. The ultimate *tour de force* in TE would be a report which consisted simply of proper names and puns. The goal is already approached in headlines of the type: HEADMASTER JONES CANED FOR HOMEWORK. Here syntax becomes almost superfluous. It might just as well read: CANED HOMEWORK FOR HEADMASTER JONES.

The *Mirror's* way with words, in short, involved a far more fundamental change in modern written English than Waterhouse allows. He is still old-fashioned enough to quote Fowler at his fellow journalists. And he can make sufficiently heavy weather of singular and plurals to put any traditional grammarian to shame. If Waterhouse had the courage of his linguistic convictions (but which of us has?), he would just give up on grammar and admit that since *Neither the ship, nor the shoe, nor the car-pener are among the exhibits* says what it is intended to say perfectly clearly, it ought therefore to be good enough for any honest Englishman. While he is right to insist that TE was deliberately designed as a written language ordinary people could and would read, he is wrong to deny so emphatically that it was ever "the language of the people". For if TE was not from its inception recognizably closer to popular usage than previous journalism had been, one would be rather hard put to it to account for its universal success. In any case, it is a misconception to suppose that "our language" is confined to what we would say or write if left unprompted to our own devices. Language is a two-way process. What the tabloids supplied, for the first time in history, was a form of written English that the great majority of the population could accept and react to as part of their own daily lives, and recognize as reflecting their own forms of linguistic expression.

What is remarkable, and easily overlooked, is that this unprecedented development took place in the traditionally conservative written language, at a time when the approved forms of spoken English for the masses were still being paternalistically censored by *Relith-era* radio. Those who can only deplore what has happened to English during the past fifty years will doubtless be quick to relate its "declining standards" to the relentless commercialism of Fleet Street. But those who can gauge the width of the dangerous gap that separated spoken English from written English during the first quarter of the twentieth century, and who also recognize what a misfortune it is for a society's written culture to get cut off from its oral culture, may reach a more just verdict on the journalists who devised TE. That verdict could be expressed by a slight and not too frequent adaptation of Housman's famous lines:

What prose abandoned, these defended,
And saved the sum of things for pay.

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The incongruous absurdity of the sight, in a variety of circumstances and surroundings, of the makers of sound, whether they are young virtuosi serenading at sunset a moustachioed peasant-farmer in a field, is delightfully portrayed by the French cartoonist Sempé in *The Musicians* (100pp. Macmillan, £5.95, 0 333 31727 0). A recurrent theme is that of musicians thrust into the world with their instruments sheathed in their cases as in the portrait of Marie-Hélène Simon, a minute, muted figure overwhelmed by the roar of lorries in an urban landscape. Here five dark-suited players pose in "The Bordeaux Hot Club, 1931" while the moon shines and the palms sway in the background and in the exotic faces of their bass drum.

Manipulating the mass mind

By Paul Smith

K. R. M. SHORT:
Feature Films as History
192pp. Croom Helm, £9.95,
0 7059 0459 2

Were George Formby and Jessie Matthews working for the National Government? Tony Aldgate, in one of the eight essays in this symposium, looks at how evidence from films bears on the question of whether a national "consensus" existed in the England of the 1930s and 40s. He sees the cinema as a medium for the propagation of ideological unity, shying away from social and political divisions in the depression years before it registered the sea-change of opinion during the war. That, however, leaves us with the problem of whether the "harmony and social integration" projected on the screen should be taken as evidence of the existence of a consensus, or of a popular desire to be reassured that there was one, or of an insidious effort to improve one, or of a disinclination to let life interfere with entertainment.

To explore it, we have to look not simply at the films but at the conditions of their manufacture and exhibition. Aldgate notes that *Love on the Dole* was prevented by the censor from reaching the screen in the 1930s. But at the conference from whose proceedings this book is assembled he must have slept through the paper in which Nicholas Pronay describes the general restraint brought about by the censorship of the British cinema in the inter-war years. One reason for the absence from films of industrial unrest, criticisms of the police or of the administration of justice, lampoons on the monarchy, disparagement of the British Empire, and allusions to the "just war" policy were all banned.

On the whole, Kenneth Short, co-author of *Feature Films and Politics*, is on the outside of the process of ideological control in the cinema. He does not see the need to look at the

how historians can make use of the most typical and widely-consumed product of the cinema, the fiction film. In his study of the British Board of Film Censors, Pronay stresses the anxiety of European governments to control film after the First World War had convinced them of its affective power. Again, Short, in an introduction sketching some of the means, methods and problems of film study, likewise lays emphasis on the role of the cinema as an influence on the mass, too important to be left to its own devices, and claims that "the struggle for the control of the life of a nation is embedded in its feature film records". Single-party states naturally included film in their repertoire of manipulation, and his collection prints D. J. Wenden's account of how Eisenstein improved on the reality of 1905 to create the revolutionary epic *Battleship Potemkin*. The screen diet of liberal democracies, too, might be prescribed by the anxiety of censors and of industry chiefs wary of controversy, to stick to what they thought wholesome or innocuous.

Yet the purposes of governing elites, and the commercial instincts of an industry, never totally defined what appeared on the screen. Thomas Cripps, in perhaps the most solidly based of these studies, examines how the wartime need to mobilize all sections of the cinema industry from anti-environmentalist blacks (conscienceless) to NAACP records and government agencies, which were to form the core of the modern civil rights movement in the United States. The theme is continued in Short's survey of the aftermath of the war to attack anti-semitism in America through the cinema, where some of the ambiguities inherent in the use of film to carry "messages" are hinted at. The American Jewish Committee may have been right to be worried that pleas for tolerance would have the opposite effect: it would have preferred the experiment to be conducted with blacks.

These discussions rely almost en-

tirely on a story-and-dialogue-based approach to film, and it is left to Elizabeth Stiebel and Paul Monaco to insist that "the pictures" are pictures and not film scripts. The former persuasively attempts to show how Jean Renoir exploited the freedom of the French cinema in the late 1930s, after the collapse of the *Pathé* and *Gaumont* empires, to express his *Popular Front* sympathies through a choice not only of theme but of visual style and structure. The latter dismisses not only the simple "story-line" reading of film, but any "reading" at all (including the semiotic) which imposes too systematic and rational a pattern, for "motion pictures are non-linear, associative, and belong to the realm of fantasy". He removes the debate to a different sphere by summing up as Jungian appreciation of films "symbolism as the manifestation of collective psychic energy, within an essentially national framework. If film is not the creature of the ruling group, or of Hollywood, or of an auteur, or of the shadowing of the collective unconscious, its interpretation passes, as Monaco's rather vague remarks on French, German and Russian cinema show, into a world of hypothesis almost impossible to prove or disprove by historical enquiry.

It is bracing for historians to have a source they do not know how to read with, and the variety of concepts and techniques displayed in this volume will be a useful stimulus to further gymnastics. That makes it the more unfortunate that a good deal of the book is marred by careless checking of the text, and by the kind of English that seems to have been picked up by the "social forces" of a diplomat's career "spiced" with the *Permanent Record* of the Foreign Office, and historians, having "poured" over the archives, "marshalled" their evidence. One page offers us the comedy line of "Karl Clatter" and "Renior", as well as two misspellings of Ramsay MacDonald, while in a footnote there written the travestied figure of "Wickham-Stuart". Why do academics and publishers labour to deserve the trouble they are in?

A literary life

By Jeremy Treglown

MURIEL SPARK:
Loitering with Intent
222pp. Bodley Head, £6.50,
0 370 30900 6

Loitering with Intent is fictional autobiography of two kinds: a made-up story whose narrator professes to be telling the truth; and a personal narrative based on truth, whose author has made a lot of it up.

The narrator, Fleur Talbot, is a successful writer looking back on events which surrounded the completion of her first novel, *Warrender Chase*, in 1950. In this respect, as in others, *Loitering with Intent* clearly stands in (as it were) a multiply sophisticated relation to Muriel Spark's *The Comforters*, published in 1957. The novel was about a character in a novel who has finished writing a study of the novel and goes away to write a novel. And there are other gatherings-up of earlier threads. Fleur takes a job helping the snobbish and, it transpires, spiritually predatory Sir Quentin Oliver to edit - indeed, to write - the memoirs of people who belong to his Autobiographical Association: a *galère* of the infirm and eccentric, familiar in part from *Memento Mori*.

There are grim casualties of Sir Quentin's power over his group (Fleur calls him "a psychological Jack the Ripper"), and one of the points is that most of his victims are women, but as in her earliest work Miss Spark treats her tragic subjects ironically, merrily being the inevitable happen. She can do so, of course, because this is after all

only a story. In the oldest of fictional traditions, her narrator claims that it is true:

While I recount what happened to me and what I did in 1949, it strikes me how much easier it is with characters in a novel than in real life. In a novel the author invents characters and arranges them in convenient order. Now that I come to write biographically I have to tell of whatever actually happened and whoever naturally turns up. The story of a life is a very informal party; there are no rules of precedence and hospitality, no invitations.

But she also reminds us that it is all invented. Fleur's own novel, *Warrender Chase*, turns out to anticipate what happens to the Autobiographical Association and its members, partly by chance or sheer prophecy, partly because Sir Quentin uses a stolen proof of the novel as a blueprint. "Life" plagiarizes art in *Loitering with Intent*, and it can do so cheerfully in the bizarre and cruellest of ways because its events, like those of the novel within the novel, are fictitious.

Now I treated the story of Warrender Chase with a light and heartless hand, as is my way when I have to give a perfectly serious account of things. No matter what is described it seems to me a sort of hypocrisy for a writer to pretend to be undergoing tragic experiences when obviously one is sitting in relative comfort with a pen and paper or before a typewriter.

As observations about the nature of fiction, such passages aren't exactly new, though they are fashionable. But as literary autobiography - Muriel Spark's reflections on her earlier work and its reception, and on the art of

writing - they give the story much of its interest. It is an interest characteristically complicated by their interconnection with the main argument, or riddle, of the book, which is about how autobiography should be written and what it perhaps reveals about how life should be lived.

In her official capacity with the Autobiographical Association, Fleur recommends desirable reading to her authors. She is keen (she is a Catholic) on Newman's *Apologia*, and also (she is a sexually emancipated woman as well as an artist) on Celine's *La Vita*. Much of the story can be seen as arbitrating between the life of Newman and the life of Celine - spirit and sensuality, the vocations of religion and art; and in the course of it Fleur seems not to work out, exactly, but to reveal that she has already somehow acquired, a middle way. She is madder than her obvious precursor, Stephen Dedalus, and when at the end of the novel she is vouchsafed a small epiphany, it is one which, so far from presenting her with a choice between mutual exclusives, naturally brings together the day-to-day, the artistic and the divine.

Some small boys were playing football, and the ball came flying straight towards me. I kicked it with a chance guess, which, if I had studied the affair and tried hard, I never could have done. Away into the air it went, and landed in the small boy's waiting hands. The boy grinned. And so, having entered the fullness of my years, from there by the grace of God I go on my way rejoicing.

This is touching and elegant, and it suggests the mildness of the whole fiction: a mildness which extends to its human dealings, too. If art and life are

shown borrowing much from each other, so too are aesthetic and moral judgments. At many points, Fleur assesses people aesthetically, according to how interesting or unusual they are, deprecating a young poet called Gray Mauser, for example, because he is "self-evident". But with the contradictions which Muriel Spark has always depicted as a typical rather than an odd human characteristic, Fleur likes Gray - she "couldn't have been happier to see him" - and repeatedly in these pages she is kind to, and is given pleasure by, people so self-evidently grey that they can hardly be called characters.

It goes without saying that *Loitering with Intent* is beautifully written. It is also exciting, at times, and often very funny. Muriel Spark's dry fluency used to be compared with Ivy Compton-Burnett's; now it seems to resemble Beckett's, casting as it does a cold eye on the humiliations of old age (the incontinent Lady Edwina, with her "fluxive precipitations"), and on the physical power of minor passions like irritation: "I was glad of my strong hips and sound cage of ribs to save me from flying apart, so explosive were my thoughts."

Yet for all this, the new work is not as intriguing or as satisfying as most of Muriel Spark's novels. Like the triolets and villanelles which Fleur (in common with other of her characters) composes, it seems too thinly well-wrought, a supremely skilful exercise in a low-risk area, a dance on a tightrope not many feet from the ground. It isn't surprising that as an autobiography it is mean on revelations; but it seems a pity that as a fiction it is less generous with its inventions than Muriel Spark has brought us to expect of her.

Imports from Brazil

By Patricia Craig

GILLIAN FREEMAN:
An Easter Egg Hunt
433pp. Hamish Hamilton, £6.95,
0 241 10568 4

In *A Patriotic Schoolgirl*, published in 1918, Angela Brazil describes an encounter between a group of high-spirited schoolgirls and a party of convalescent soldiers from a nearby Red Cross Hospital. "Girls, girls!" cried Miss Duckworth's shocked and agitated voice. "Come along at once! Don't look at those soldiers. Attention! Form line! Immediately. Quick march!"

A similar meeting takes place in Gillian Freeman's new novel, though without the arrival of a mistress to disrupt it. (Gillian Freeman is an admirer of the works of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, ventures into the spinney with thoughts of foul play in mind. But no body is ever brought to light. Madeleine has vanished, it seems, as unaccountably as those Australian schoolgirls who went on a picnic to Hanging Rock on St Valentine's Day in 1900.)

"This is fiction, however, and so an explanation may be proffered. The second part of the book, which is set slightly back in time, concerns Madeleine's experiences at Fairwater Academy, although there is no direct access to Madeleine's thoughts or feelings. The 'author' of the story is one of the senior pupils at the school, who soon retreats into a third-person narrative: 'unlike a third person, I, Nesbitt, author of the *Treasure Seekers*, she assures her readers, 'I will not reveal myself inadvertently.' However, her identity is disclosed at the end of Part Three ('written' twenty-three years after the event), along with the solution to the mystery.

If the novel constantly invites ironic comparison with the works of Angela Brazil (who is mentioned on page 48), we may be sure that this is part of the narrative design. The correspondences are really rather remarkable:

There was a sensation when Enid Young was discovered buying pink Paper Poudre. (Brazil). Madeleine went across to the Toilettes and Pharmaceutics, where Miss Jackson presided, would like some paper poultice. (Freeman).

A horrible hush spread over the room, and for a moment everybody stared in frozen horror. (Brazil). There was a frozen second which remained in the mind of all of them ever afterwards. (Freeman).

inside one of your drawers (Brazil).

Please hand me that book," Her voice grew icy. "Is it a novel?" (Freeman).

The small private school with pupils sent back to England from the Colonies, the navy blue cloaks and velvet hats of the uniform, the dishes of pink blancmange served up in the dining room, the encouragement of hobbies: these are all standard features in the juvenile fiction of the period. Fairwater Academy even contains a closet, where girls guilty of misconduct may be discovered at an exciting moment: a door monitor named Gladys; and in the grounds, a newly planted tree still festooned with pieces of silk and splintered wood from the tail empenage of a crashed biplane. Among the mistresses are go-ahead Miss Cadogan, who is "modern enough" to be skilled at hockey (and who has also had the privilege of seeing Miss Isadora Duncan dance), and "tall, gentle Miss Darke who read poetry so thrillingly to the senior class" (the latter surely derived from Angela Brazil's *Lavender Lady*; a self-portrait).

But Gillian Freeman is not writing parody; nor is her own style open to ridicule, even of the most amiable sort. Unlike Angela Brazil, whose artless assumption of schoolgirlishness made her so splendid a target for the humorists, Ms Freeman is entirely conscious of the effects of her creation, girlish or otherwise, and uses it as an exercise in exclusion; and she knows exactly what to omit. Her subject is violent feeling, betrayal, desperation - all passionately expressed. With the utmost economy, she presents a rural community - school, village, church and so on - at a moment of transition. (As always, the lesson in selecting the most striking details of social custom and behaviour.) On the one hand we find the pastoral order and innocence of the nostalgic vision (as in Philip Larkin's "The place names all hazed over with flowering grasses").

Along the paths and lanes the villagers of Fairwater Edge, and

Fairwater Green converged upon the school. The children walked in groups, neatly dressed in their Sunday clothes, cut-down trousers pressed by hot irons, jackets patched, caps on straight; the girls wore bonnets and summer straw hats and tam o'shanter and everyone had shoes on their feet in deference to God and Madame and the young ladies.

Just like an illustration by Francis Bedford. But the effects of the First World War were at this time already beginning to be felt, and we also have the wounded doctor, a casualty of Ypres, carried home on a stretcher, to embody - but in the least insistent way - despair and disintegration.

If Gillian Freeman fails to distinguish sharply between the characters of her schoolgirls, it's perhaps because girls lumped together in this way do tend to lose signs of individuality. In *An Easter Egg Hunt*, apart from Madeleine, only Dolly, who wears her hair in a thick yellow plait, and plain-featured Florrie, who goes in for photography, are at all prominent. The others fulfil the function allotted to them, which is to provide an atmosphere. They behave girlishly, passing notes in church and giggling.

Literary associations are plentiful in this novel; it seems worth mentioning that Elizabeth Bowen, who called one of her stories "An Easter Egg Party", also wrote authoritatively about girls' schools of the period. Like a detective novelist, Gillian Freeman plants clues in her narrative (a missing blanket and a small glass bottle), but with so little emphasis that you only notice them on a second reading. In the end it is not detective work but chance which establishes the facts. (When she impersonates a magazine writer Gillian Freeman is careful to get the tone exactly right: "By one of life's extraordinary coincidences the conclusion to the story was recently revealed to me." The book's final section is called "The Answer", but it might just as well have taken its title from the last chapter of *The Madcap of the School*: "A Mystery Unravelled".

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Of horses and men

By Owen Lattimore

MICHAEL SCHAFER:

An Eye for a Horse
Translated by Anthony Dent
235pp. J. A. Allen. £7.95.
0 85131 320 5

HAROLD B. BARCLAY:

The Role of the Horse in Man's Culture
398pp. J. A. Allen. £8.95.
0 85131 329 9

Michael Schäfer has worked as a groom, with pack-horses, and as a veterinarian. (Like his wife), he is also a veterinarian. He now breeds event horses in Bavaria. He is thus qualified to describe horses from the inside (equipment for eating and digestion) as well as from the outside (proportions of body, neck, head, legs). His book has been well translated from the German by Anthony Dent, himself an established writer on the horse (see his *The Horse, through Fifty Centuries of Civilization*, 1974). In these days when annotation, either at the foot of the page or at the end of the book, becomes more and more expensive, Dent has adopted an admirable method of editing, in adapting the book for English-language readers. He inserts comments and amplifications in the text itself, in square brackets. The method reads very smoothly. It is regrettable, though, in a book of this kind, which requires frequent cross-reference, that there is neither an index nor a bibliography.

While Schäfer's book can be read with profit by all who have a general interest in horses, it is also addressed to a more intimate circle of those who want to be able to judge a horse, either for purposes of competition or when buying one suitable for their own use. He advises the reader, quite rightly, that there is no such animal as the "ideal" horse: every breed or strain should be bought with one primary use in mind, though it may often have supplementary uses. There are,

moreover, no "pure" strains: first through migration in the wild and then through the intervention of man there has been cross-breeding for untold thousands of years. Even the last surviving wild horse, the Przewalski, which has not been sighted in Mongolia for twenty years or so but reportedly survives in very small numbers in the Sinkiang province of China, is not "pure". Any Mongol horse-herder old enough to remember when they were still occasionally sighted will tell you that wild stallions used to steal mares from domestic herds and lead them away into the wild.

There is a theory that the Przewalski horse represents the ancestral breed of all the horses of Asia and Europe (slowly differentiated over many thousands of years). Another theory, favoured by Schäfer, is that while the eohippus or "dawn horse" of 70 million years ago was a native of North America—a fox-sized little creature—it migrated to Eurasia over a then existing landbridge, at or a little north of the Behring Straits, not in a steady stream but during an immensely long period, interrupted by long gaps, so that later migrants were already well differentiated. (Incidentally, no one has been able to explain why this proto-horse or family of proto-horses died out completely in America, but flourished in Eurasia.) Out of this long migration there developed two main classifications of the horses of today, which Europeans call "hot-blooded" and "cold-blooded"—a usage that is a little confusing, since the blood-temperature of all ponies and horses is the same. The terms actually mean "more spirited" and "more phlegmatic". They are also known as the "northern" or "southern" group and the "northern" or "southern" group, which had already become so differentiated that while the average height was thirteen and a half hands, there were also giant sub-races up to eighteen hands.

These giant horses had died out long before the age of domestication, but I suppose that, by cross-breeding in the wild, some of their blood had already

passed into other species, so that by later crossbreeding and what Schäfer calls "atavism" the heavy charger of the medieval European knight and the great shire horses and other draught horses could be evolved. Schäfer is very strong on the importance of hybridization, when the mating of horses of widely different characteristics awakens long-latent ancestral genes. He does not believe that medieval man could have produced such results so quickly simply by selection and feeding. On the whole he is undoubtedly right, but still I think he does not allow enough for climate and feeding. The Race Clubs of Peking and Tientsin, in the old days, bought their race-ponies, through Chinese dealers, from Mongolia. The Mongols would sell to the dealers no stallions, only geldings (though they did sell mares to the Chinese, for breeding mules). The geldings were all at least six years old, the age at which the Mongols considered them fully grown. The Race Club stewards examined them very strictly, rejecting any that exceeded the standard pony height or showed any characteristics that were horse-like rather than pony-like. These ponies were bred on the open steppe, with no shelter and no supplementary feeding. Moreover they did not get, in their first few months, their full ration of mother's milk, because the Mongols drank so much mare's milk themselves. They therefore did not have as much flesh or as much bone as they should have had when they faced the appalling

cold of their first Mongolian winter. These "fully grown" horses were brought down to China in the autumn and not raced until the next spring. They were brought into condition over the winter in warm stables, with good feeding and plenty of exercise, but not too much. By the spring, it was not uncommon for them to have put on two inches—half a hand—in height, and some of them looked more like small horses than large ponies.

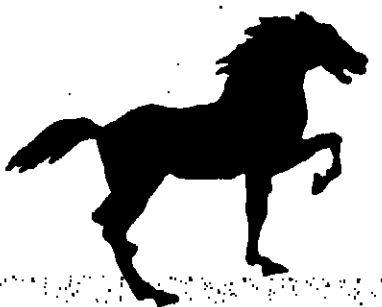
The sweep and content of Harold B. Barclay's book are quite different. As an anthropologist, his real centre of gravity is man, with the horse as one factor in the societies that man has fashioned. Since his reading is extraordinarily wide, it may be well to note at once that, unlike Schäfer, he has a habit of bibliographic and a good index, though neither is perfect. His economical way of giving a reference is, instead of a footnote, to put say "Piggott, 1950" in brackets, in the text. One then looks in the bibliography and finds the title and publisher. The defect of his method is that he gives the latest edition, often a reprint, which often confuses the priority of the information or ideas of important writers. Thus for Radloff, an important Russian ethnographer of the nineteenth century, he gives 1968, which is the date of a reprint, in Holland, of the English translation of the original. The defect of the index is that it is incomplete: one cannot find important indicators of cultural periods, like Hallstatt, Pagan by page; however, he is fascinating. Moreover, he writes a clear English prose. Although U.S.-born and now a professor in a Canadian university, he is free of "social science" (sic) jargon.

Professor Barclay writes so fascinatingly that he invites comment—not negative criticism, but suggestions for further research. Thus, for example: Why, in different societies, were the stallion, the mare, or the gelding, the preferred mount of a warrior? There is a primitive "macho" idea that a fully masculine warrior should ride a fully male horse. Where horses were few, the élite stallion of an élite warrior

could be trained to rear up and strike and bite the stallion of the opposite hand. For the warriors of China, Khan, on the other hand, stirrups and Geldings were preferred, because they would not tend to split away from the military column, like stallions and mares. In Chinese Inner Mongolia in the 1920s and 30s, along the Yangtze where Chinese colonists were encroaching on Mongol pasture land, peculiar conventions developed. Chinese bandits were often deserting soldiers, but there were also bandits who were peasants, organized by their own landlords, who made long expeditions, plundering distant villages and owned by kinsmen of their own landlords—a case of "capitalist counter-revolution" that I have not seen anywhere else. During the war, these bandits would ride through the Mongol pastures, unopposed by the local Mongol self-defence bands who they molested Mongol camps or tried to steal Mongol-owned horses as re-mounts. At night they would turn down from the pastures to occupy a Chinese village for the night. Approaching such a village, it is said, scented mares it would whinny, giving the alarm. As for mares, both Chinese and Mongols would tell you that a mare was hit by a bullet behind the below the ribs it would give up and collapse. Therefore fighting men always rode geldings which, they said, even if mortally wounded would carry on until they dropped dead.

The case of the Arabs must be unique, or almost unique. Because of desert conditions they did not own large herds of horses and so did not have a big reserve of geldings to use as re-mounts. On a raid, stallions would give the alarm. In this case, therefore, a barren mare became the chosen mount of the élite warrior.

Because Barclay's book is so wide other examples of how the use of the horse has been determined by its needs and limitations of the body using it, its title, *The Role of the Horse in Man's Culture*, is exactly right.



From internal to international

By Christopher Thorne

PAUL KENNEDY:

The Realities Behind Diplomacy
Background Influences on British External Policy, 1865-1980
416pp. George Allen and Unwin.
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Contemporaries and historians alike have had much to say concerning the problems which have confronted Britain within the international arena since the gap between her power and her commitments began to widen during the latter half of the nineteenth century. To some observers, historical analogies have presented themselves as an aid to understanding what was taking place and when Paul Kennedy in his new study offers a parallel between Britain's struggle to meet her military obligations after 1945 and the position of Austria-Hungary before 1914, he is in part echoing Anthony Eden, for example, who towards the end of the Second World War saw the United States as taking the place of Britain in the way that Britain had come to overshadow Austria after 1815. Likewise, Arnold Toynbee returned in 1942 from a visit to the United States, where he had had to listen to attacks on Britain's imperial role, appreciating, he believed, "how the poor Austrians felt in the nineteenth century when Gladstone denounced their role in Lombardy". And when Toynbee went on to reflect upon "the margin of security... of wealth... of time and leisure to give to things other than the war" enjoyed by Americans and now denied to the British, it made him realize at last, he declared, what the French had long felt in terms of their German neighbours: "what they could never make me and my fellow-countrymen understand until it was too late."

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Gladwyn, and under neither appellation wanting confidence in his understanding of international affairs. And although it was acknowledged within the Foreign Office in 1944-45 that in order to ensure essential American financial aid after the war "we may well find ourselves forced to follow the United States in a line of policy with which we do not fundamentally agree", the Suez fiasco of 1956 was to be only one, particularly dramatic, manifestation of the illusions retained after—and in part because of—the defeat of Germany. "We are a world power and a world influence", proclaimed Harold Wilson in 1964, "or we are nothing."

The "realities" behind Britain's external policies have included, then, a lack of realism, and in the valdatory dispatch that Sir Nicholas Henderson wrote from the Embassy in Paris in 1979 (published in *The Economist* of June 2 the same year), Britain's decline after 1945 was rightly attributed to inadequacies of perception as well as of economic performance. In addition, of course, developments had taken place within the international system as a whole since the period of British pre-eminence—the rise of German power, and then the overshadowing of Europe by the two superpowers—which were quite beyond London's control, however realistically they were viewed.

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Superpowers (Yale University Press, 1979). Kennedy's new book can be seen as complementing DePorte's work by concentrating upon a single state within the European sub-system. At the same time it supplements, by surveying a much longer period of history, more detailed studies of British foreign policy in its domestic setting such as Zara Steiner's *Britain and the Origins of the First World War* and Maurice Cowling's *The Impact of Hitler*. Kennedy's work can also be placed alongside Correll Barnett's *The Collapse of British Power*; but whereas the latter sought to make the connection between domestic developments and international affairs on the basis of a series of bold hypotheses, Kennedy has proceeded in more pragmatic fashion, following the makers of British foreign policy through their problems and decisions within the periods 1865-1914, 1914-1919, 1919-1939, and 1939-1980.

Whatever the approach and structure adopted for such a study, any attempt to trace the interrelationships surrounding the domestic setting and external policies is bound to come up against formidable problems. It is not difficult to show the links between, say, the mounting pressure upon a state's economic resources and a diminishing ability to meet existing defence commitments. (In Britain's case, examples include her position in the Far East before the concluding of an alliance with Japan in 1902, and again before the decision to withdraw from East of Suez altogether in the late 1960s.) Or again, we can be reasonably precise about, say, the ways in which public opinion influ-

enced governmental thinking over foreign policy during the Abyssinian crisis of 1935-36. But what of the possible relevance to a state's performance in the international arena of such features of the domestic scene as patterns of education, the class structure, or the political culture as a whole? How firmly and specifically can such elements be proffered, not simply as part of a "background" to foreign affairs, but in terms of actual cause and effect? And how precise can one be concerning movements in the opposite direction, whereby international developments may be thought to have influenced assumptions and attitudes, for example, within the domestic environment? (Some of the problems involved here from a social-psychological point of view have been indicated in studies such as those contained in H. C. Kellman's *International Behavior*.)

The strong likelihood, of course, is that one will end up with separate lines of narrative—cum-analysis, one on the domestic setting and the other concerning foreign policy and international affairs, the two of them interwoven here and there, but often running side by side in a relationship that may appear obvious, but which on close examination remains a matter for inference and speculation. It is therefore much to Kennedy's credit that on a good many occasions he is able to offer interconnections that are both precise and illuminating: for example, between party politics and foreign policy in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and in the inter-war years, between domestic political and social tensions on the one hand and governmental

approaches to foreign affairs on the other.

Inevitably, there are other passages in the book when the process of interweaving seems less successful: when sections dealing with foreign policy begin to read like self-contained narrative summaries. In part, this may be a matter of proportion. For example, Kennedy devotes ten pages to the foreign policies of the years between 1956 and 1980, but thirty-eight to those of the same number of years between 1890 and 1914, which is where many of his own special interests have lain. (A methodological problem is also involved here—one which might usefully have been discussed by the author. For the greater availability of unpublished primary sources before about 1950 is not a matter of quantity alone; it tends to mean that, whereas this historian can trace the reasoning and dialectic behind foreign policy step by step for the earlier period, he or she has often, where the archives are still closed, to infer motives and reasoning from the overt actions themselves.)

A further question concerns the structure to be adopted when seeking to discern links between domestic and international developments. Kennedy has chosen to trace, within each of his chronological divisions, first "structure and attitudes" and then "debates and policies". The merits of such a pattern are demonstrated by what he has himself achieved here on this basis. Nor is it easy to see how the marked changes that took place during the entire period, 1865-1980, could have been accorded their full weight without the adoption within the book of chronological divisions of some kind. It is, therefore, only in tentative and speculative fashion that one asks, on completing *The Realities Behind Diplomacy*, whether it would have been possible to bring out certain major themes from across the entire period (rather as Stanley Hoffman has done for post-war US foreign policy in his *Culiver's Troubles*), before examining changes within it. Or would it have been worth sacrificing some of the narrative of British foreign policy itself, one wonders, in order to bring together in rather more detail and over selected issues "structures and attitudes" and "debates and policies"?

Questions such as these are themselves evidence that Kennedy has written a stimulating book. Some of the particular judgments that he offers are clearly debatable (is it adequate to argue, for instance, from the continued existence after 1945 of class distinctions and great inequalities of wealth, that the 1939-45 struggle "had really been less of a people's war than contemporaries believed"?), but by thinking in wide terms he has provided a valuable work for the general reader and student alike. *The Realities Behind Diplomacy* is both a clear and informative survey in its own right, and a starting point for more detailed work in international history and foreign policy analysis.

An Orchard Path

A gully tremor in the chime of six
From his daishevelled mantelpiece... She waits
For the plaint of the express along the cutting.
Which she guesses the wind will let her hear.
Then she rises, in a calm of strict obedience,
And walks off obediently to be heard.
Securely seated in her drawing-room
As the doors of the carriage gape and slam.

—Though one day the train has left, she is running
And scarcely home before her lawyer husband
Is entering and handing his hat naively
To the decreed old fellow in the hall.
Catching her breath, she comes in from the garden
As if from the garden and nowhere else,
Dividing the curtains no more than her hair
Would be slightly rearranged by an innocent breeze.

—And later still, one day the whistle-call
Dies out, she hears it, over the summer fields,
And she does not move at all. She stands there still,
Though the train is already some way on.
And allocating other destinies.
The lawyer is destined to the empty house.
Her hair is neat. She smiles for the man in his room.
He stares at his prize incredulous and afraid.

Alan Brownjohn

Natural contraptions

By D. M. Knight

STEPHEN JAY GOULD:

The Panda's Thumb
343pp. W. W. Norton. £6.95.
0 393 01380 4

The panda has no thumb. It is a kind of bear, whose paw has been modified, so that it can grasp bamboo shoots, a wrist bone being transformed into what looks like a thumb. In this splendid series of essays, mixing entertainment and instruction like the best of the nineteenth-century popularizers, Stephen Jay Gould uses examples like this to bring home important points, especially about evolutionary theory. The panda's thumb is a contraption. One of the design of a panda from scratch, one would not adopt a wrist bone to do the job of a thumb. Such odd arrangements are, for Gould, the most powerful arguments for evolution and natural selection, because parts more elegantly fitted to their function might actually be accounted for by a succession of lucky accidents. Gould, where nature has covered her tracks and where natural theologians tend to confine their studies, he should look for the incongruous and the rudimentary: places where the materials available entail a less than ideal solution.

Gould is a Darwinian. Some of the questions he asks are those raised by natural theologians in the past. William Darwin pondered on the approximate equality of male and female births, and the ineffectiveness of polygamy was a theme common in works of the eighteenth century. Gould can give an evolutionary account of why, in general, there

should be about equal numbers of males and females; and why this should cease to be so in species where brother inates with sister, as in some mites. Paley had been especially impressed with prospective contrivances, provided before the creature had a need for them: Darwin and his ally Alfred Russel Wallace argued about the human brain, Wallace arguing that because savages had the same mental capacity as everyone else but did not need or use it, man's brain must have been exempt from natural selection and man himself a unique creation. For Gould, as for Darwin, organs have latent capacities, and something built for one job can perform others too. We do not need to invoke a Designer seeing far into the future.

It is almost the fashion today among historians of science to see Darwin as relatively unimportant in the rise of the professional scientist, and the research "laboratory" leads away from Darwin, who can come to seem a living fossil closer to Gilbert than to his budding contemporaries in universities and museums. Gould, who is a good historian of science as well as a working paleontologist, will have none of this. For him, natural history is perfectly respectable and not some awkward stage through which sciences pass on the way to the author of some kind of holy writ, or a really great man whose way of working can teach us much about how to do science, and whose insights can be illuminating for us.

Gould sees Wallace as a stricter Darwinian than Darwin himself. Wallace tried to account for everything in terms of natural selection, while Darwin always assigned a considerable but not exclusive role to it. Organisms are indeed so complicated that multiple

mechanisms must be invoked to explain them, and the harmony and strict deduction that Wallace sought may be chimerical; it may be that Wallace's early mathematical training led him more readily into taking physics as a kind of model for the whole of science, as many philosophers of science have been prone to do. For Gould, evolutionary theory is firm, and unlikely to be completely overturned, and yet still fruitfully undeveloped; it is, as it was for T. H. Huxley, an excellent working hypothesis.

Where he differs from Darwin, as Huxley tentatively did, is in rejecting gradualism. Charles Lyell had from 1830 made geology a science in which past changes were to be explained in terms of causes acting now, and in which enormous tracts of time were available, so that small drippings of water could wear away even the highest of stones. With Huxley's full flash of violent revolution in France, no doubt most well-to-do Englishmen felt a prejudice in favour of gradual change; and in natural history there was already a long tradition of nature making no jumps, associated for example with the Great Chain of Being. Nevertheless, in Darwin's day, there were also "ferocious" theories of evolution, that in Robert Chambers's *Vestiges of the Past*, for example, or the working which Owen seems to have been working towards. Such theories have the great advantage for taxonomists that the species which they are classifying become fixed entities, one can classify unstable phenomena like clouds, but stable ones are easier.

Gradualism should lead to the finding of transitional forms in the fossil record, but there are extremely few, so that Darwin and Lyell had to emphasize the poverty and imperfection of the existing record. The evidence, as Gould points out, fitted the

ideas of "catastrophists" like Cuvier and Buckland, a good deal better. Even though there is now much more fossil evidence, there are still many transitional forms. Again, it is the use of a half-developed organ, and it seems as though some more jerky mechanism must be invoked, the evolution of a species being a matter of rapid changes in small populations, followed by long periods of stability. Gould's suggestion is changes in rates of growth, especially in embryos, an idea he has developed in detail in another book, *Ontogeny and Phylogeny* (1977), which shows the same mixture of historical and biological acumen as this one.

For Gould, Darwin's secret was his mixture of doubt, conjecture, testing, abandonment of false leads, and his readiness to wander into fields like political economy. Neither a tireless fact-collector nor an inspired guesser, he worked by bold analogies, refining his working hypotheses: a picture not wholly unlike William Whewell's in Darwin's own day. Gould is not a success-worshipper, and he devotes essays to other men of science, who made bold attempts at syntheses, but came to grief. He is to be applauded for taking this view, that apparent dogmas written in ivory are to be taken seriously, in a version of Gould's dictum that until we can understand someone's ignorance we should presume ourselves ignorant of his understanding. Gould therefore looks at "theories" like Goldschmidt and Kirkpatrick, and also at the Pildown affair. He remarks about this, that the really interesting question is why it was so generally accepted; but then goes on to make the interesting suggestion that the "fringe" may have been a physical joke by Dawson and Teilhard, which got out of control.

Such things are not entirely unknown. William Whewell, the leading naturalist of the early nineteenth century, seems to have led an eminent analogy up the garden path in connection with the new metal palladium.

It is not merely underdogs among the theorists who interest Gould, but also underdog groups of animals, like dinosaurs and mammals, and the same impulse makes him sensitive to the racism so characteristic of nineteenth-century biology. Indeed he sees science as an accessible human activity firmly rooted in culture, and not as something incomprehensible and dispassionate. This means that he is always provisional, and Gould seems to delight in correcting his own guesses and, in discussing hypotheses that may turn out true or false.

Those outside the sciences in our own day sometimes proclaim themselves anti-Darwinian, and believe that evolution need not be accepted. This is quite a different matter from Gould's refusal to see scientific theories as other than provisional: the two years before the *Origin of Species* was published, Philip Gosse invited readers of his *Omphalos* (1857) to suppose themselves present when, for example, "undoubtedly, more massive, Palm appeared, and Louis Agassiz envisaged creation of marine populations of plants and animals in the localities they now occupy." To accept evolution by natural selection, even in 1859, meant at least accepting a likely story rather than suspending all critical faculties and by our own day the evidence has grown much more convincing. Those who want a readable and elegant series of essays that will give an excellent picture (with a long historical perspective) of what is going on in the life sciences could not do better than to read this book.

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Searching for the primal sentence

By Frank Cioffi

JOHN FORRESTER:

Language and the Origins of Psychoanalysis
285pp. Macmillan. £15.
0 353 25946 7

Home they brought her warrior dead:

She nor swooned nor uttered cry:
All her maidens watching said:
"She must weep or she will die."

Anyone familiar with Freud's *Studies on Hysteria* will recognize that Tennyson's maidens were anticipating the baleful consequences of what he there calls "strangled affect". And this place, "strangled affect", is the place of the ever active tooth of remorse, gnawing from the inmost heart outwardly. It is no giant step from Freud's theory of hysteria to his theory of the unconscious, and his theory of the unconscious is the theory of the unconscious. (The early Freud is Kleinian + Jackson.) Nor can this point be met by conceding that poets of exceptional penetration may have anticipated this or that aspect of Freud's theory, for the notions with which Freud worked had blatant folk-cultural roots.

When Malcolm exhorts the bereaved Macduff "give sorrow words, the grief that does not speak whispers the overfraught heart and bids it break" he was exploiting a commonplace, not augmenting our (or Macduff's) knowledge of the mind. When Captain Wentworth tells Anne Elliott that the shock of Louisa Musgrove's accident must have been all the greater for her "not having overpowered her at the time" we are not meant to credit him with extraordinary perceptiveness although it is Freud's concept of "arrests of abreaction" that he is invoking. Nor do we need instruction to understand why, when Hans Christian Andersen's Little Mermaid was distressed, "she suffered all the more because she hadn't any tears". As a popular song of the 1950s proclaimed "It's no secret, you feel better when you cry." (An index of the potency of this explanatory paradigm is the tendency to mistranslate "Ugolino's tremendous words" (Matthew Arnold), "to non piangere, e dentro impietrate": as "weep not, so all stone I grew within" (Cary) which reverses the order of events.) Forrester claims that "what Freud took over from aphasia theory was the notion that a symptom's apparent meaninglessness could be illumin-

ated by placing it in a very specific traumatic context where it did have meaning." But weren't Lady Macbeth's hands once bloody? What does this leave to be taken over from "aphasia theory"?

Forrester also claims that "strange detours were necessary in order to try and discover what Freud could possibly have meant when he talked in 1890 of the magic power of words". But every slight detour takes us to the magic power of ideas. Consider the stigmatic tradition: non-cruciform specimens of stigmatic scars from King Dagobert's ideogenic scar of the imagination to "the awful symbol" imprinted in the flesh of Nathaniel Hawthorne's puritan minister - "the effect of the ever active tooth of remorse, gnawing from the inmost heart outwardly". It is no giant step from conceptions embodied in these examples to the therapeutic use of hypnotic suggestion which is what Freud was referring to when he talked of "the magic power of words" - perhaps an expression of exultation at his success in regularizing Frau Emmy's periods by this means.

One of the issues Forrester addresses himself to is how we are to construe Freud's claim that events which occurred in infancy may be remembered in analysis although "they were impossible for the child to grasp psychologically at the time". Freud's central paper on this topic, which for some reason Forrester doesn't refer to (Repetition, Recollection and Working Through), makes two distinctions with respect to recallability - one a temporal one between events (where "events" is construed completely generically) which occurred before and those which occurred after a certain point (which Freud does not specify except to call it "very early"), and the other between "impressions and events experienced" and "fantasies, impulses, feelings" etc. The former being recallable and the latter not. But in the end Freud leaves it uncertain how strictly he wishes to be held to this view - "recollection in the old style, reproduction in the mind, remains the goal of (our) endeavours". Nevertheless Forrester explains the strange phenomenon of the recall of that which was never conscious thus: "Certain events had not been thought because the verbal residues were not available with which to think them." It is in this way that we are to make sense of the notion of a traumatic infantile experience which "had not been

thought" at the time but which may, if the victim is fortunate, find therapeutic expression in the course of a "talking cure". But what makes the words spoken by the adult a veridical account of his pre-verbal infantile experience?

In the *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein comments on the comparable problem posed by the reminiscences of Mr Ballard, the Helen Keller of the deaf and mute, who reported in later years wondering, at a stage before he had mastered language, "How came the world into being?" "Are you sure - one would like to ask - that this is the correct translation of your wordless thoughts into words. . . . These recollections are a queer memory phenomenon and I do not know what conclusions one can draw from them about the past of the man who recounts them." Do we stand in the same relation to psycho-analytic reminiscences as we do to Ballard's cosmogenic speculations?

Consider a less problematic case. If in the course of abreacting a birth trauma a patient reported thinking "This must be his first breech birth!" or "What does he think he's doing with those forceps?" we would have no choice but to dispute the veridicality of his memories. The problem is how to distinguish naked recollection from after-meditation where we don't have blatant anachronism to help us. The earlier the period the purported memories relate to the more acute the problem. In the case of babies as like Wittgenstein's lion, if they could talk we wouldn't understand them.

I was unable to follow Forrester's own solution to this problem, which hinges on his assertion that "the criteria for the genuineness of a memory must be sought elsewhere than in the fidelity with which a recollection reproduces a trace". (But two of his allusions are mistaken - the Rat Man never remembered being beaten; the Wolf Man did remember the primal scene.)

Forrester chides Freud for his timidity in discounting, on the grounds that Leonardo lived before the Rosetta Stone was deciphered, any connection between Leonardo's vulture fantasy and the fact that the Egyptian for mother was a vulture, but warns to him for suggesting that there may have been one between the borer, stuck in Little Hans's stomach in one of his fantasies and the fact that "Prometheus (Promantha), the creator of man is etymologically the borer". In



"Portrait of a woman" (1921), a chalk drawing by Oskar Kokoschka, part of a collection of oil paintings, watercolours, drawings and graphics to be sold by auction by Karl and Faber in Munich on June 4 and 5.

general, his account of Freud's having over fixed symbolism is difficult to follow. The pertinent quotations are withheld and the reason for Freud's hesitancy and vacillation are not adequately explored. 1912: "Since we have acquired confidence in our understanding of dream symbolism we know ourselves to be independent of the patient's associations." 1925: "Dream interpretation . . . without reference to the dreamer's association would . . . remain a piece of unscientific virtuosity of the most doubtful value." And though this was reiterated in one of the last things he wrote, *The Outline of Psychoanalysis*, in the intervening *Introductory Lectures* of 1932 he had once again endorsed fixed symbolism. Forrester claims that "it was a practical exigency - the failure of detail, the lack of a connection, silence - which the theory of symbols was meant to answer." But he doesn't explain why the fact that a connection between terms is innate and unlearned should preclude associations between them. There is another difficulty: Once we have resorted to fixed symbolism to make the symbol speak, how do we shut it up? How are literal occurrences of a term to be distinguished from symbolic ones? In the year of the publication in English of the *Interpretation of Dreams* (1913) an American psychologist protested hyperbolically "We may explain by Freudian principles, why trees have their root in the ground, why we write with pens, why we put a quart of wine into a bottle instead of hanging it on hooks like a ham, etc. etc." Consider Freud's claim that hysterical headaches are a manifestation of displacement upwards. Suppose a sufferer not given to colourful speech were to proclaim that her head felt like a ruptured hymen. This would be a persuasive bit of confirmation, detail; but only providing that there was no innate connection between head and genitals since on the theory of fixed symbolism it is just what someone with a non-hysterical headache might say.

What does Forrester have in mind when he says that Freud accepted Stekel's use of fixed symbolism because "according to Freud's criteria Stekel was usually right"? There is no mention of criteria in the letter which Forrester cites though in another letter Freud says Stekel "has the best nose of any of us for the secrets of the unconscious." Because he is a perfect swine, whose we are really decent people who submit only reluctantly to the evidence. Was this one of Freud's criteria?

Forrester's own contribution to the theory of the hysterical obsessions in generalising Freud's procedure in his analysis of beating fantasies and of persecutory feelings. The patient's illness must first be translated into a propositional form and then turned backwards to the primal utterance of which its stages were transforms. The language of the symptom, he writes, "could be conceived of as a set of marks that is structured by derivatives of primal sentences - the core of the neuroses." But to what end? Symptoms, to be so conceived, the word "cure" comes trippingly off Forrester's tongue but he nowhere presents any reasons for crediting that the phenomenon he so lovingly and speculatively describes has ever taken place. Where has it been shown that the psychotherapeutically induced remission of suffering or incapacity was due to the recovery and utterance of a primal sentence which formed the core of the neuroses? Perhaps Forrester is aware of this objection for he also speaks of "conviction or belief as the final touchstone of therapeutic success", so that acquiescence in psychoanalytic theory is no longer merely a condition of cure but has become cure itself.

"The propositions posited as giving rise to or representing clinical material seem to lack empirical confirmation but are nonetheless necessary. Having made this claim, Forrester provides no reasons for believing that the species of "desires" which Freud's reconstructions of infantile life came to attain differed from that which the pull of Dreyfus had for the French Army, or covens; flights on broomsticks and copulations with the devil for the witch-hunters.

At the end of his book Forrester makes some suggestions as to how his riches might best be mined. It will not have passed unnoticed that it will not be easy to find this work a disciplinary niche. It is a historical work, attempting to find a certain "reading" that could be reiterated endlessly and still remain a definitive reading, as if, once read, Freud would not have to be reread. Or is this work an attempt at reformulation. Via a historical conceptual argument, the foundations of psychoanalysis, so that where once we say biology we now say philology; where once we saw symbols deciding we now see phonetic switching. I can do neither of these ways of leading this work.

There is still another use to which Forrester's book may be put - as a demonstration of the topicality and pertinence of Wittgenstein's thirty-year-old dictum: "Freud's fanciful pseudo-explanations (precisely because they are so brilliant) perform a disservice. Now any ass has these pictures available for use in 'explaining' symptoms of illness."

To liturgical ends

By C. H. Sisson

E. MARTIN BROWNE with HENZIE BROWNE:
Two in One
234pp. Cambridge University Press.
£15.
0 521 23254 6

To a young man who had known the earlier work of Eliot as a revelation, of a kind which is hardly possible after the age of twenty, the publication of *The Rock*, in 1934, brought a puzzling impact. Any new work from this august hand could not be received without a respect not free from awe. On the other hand a first reading of the new text displayed the demi-god walking with a mortal's assurance than one had thought possible. My predisposition in favour of Eliot was so great that this fact itself passed for a minor revelation, as I suppose it was. There was that awful prose dialogue, and I hardly noticed that in the "Prefatory Note" Eliot had tried hard to dissociate himself from some of it. My reaction anyhow was astonishment, then puzzlement, that the exponent of a magisterial discrimination had allowed such talk in his neighbourhood. I was sufficiently apprised, from *Ash Wednesday* and the pages of *The Criterion*, of Eliot's ecclesiastical interests, and was perhaps more prepared than some of my contemporaries to think that these were not in themselves a subject for derision. I knew nothing, however, of "Anglican circles" of any kind. Eliot's Christianity was an intellectual possibility, merely, seen without the supporting social network. Some of the choruses of *The Rock* yielded their own rhetorical intoxication, even if it was a less acute pleasure than was to be had from *The Waste Land* or even *The Hollow Men*. There was the novelty, to me, of the choral speaking, and here and there a chorus which seemed proper enough from the lips of the London poet.

I journeyed to London, to the time-honoured city, where the River flows, with foreign flotations. Too many things were happening at that time for me to consider the new techniques and the new tone - the new preoccupations - very coherently, and the greater polish of *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935) must have been vaguely reassuring. In retrospect one might say that, despite all the polish, despite all the literary accomplishment - which Eliot's verse never lost - *The Rock* and *Murder in the Cathedral* represented a coarsening in the mind of their author, and a coarsening of his versification.

What was supposed to be happening - and this no doubt deflected the reader's mind, as such generalities do - was the revivification of the poetic drama. In the events which were supposed to constitute this process, the late E. Martin Browne played an important part. The "Prefatory Note" says that the scenario of *The Rock* was written by Browne, "under whose direction . . . and submissive to whose expert criticism", Eliot had written the choruses and dialogues. That was a beginning for Eliot. He had been here before as dramatist, but he had been to write a "play" (his own inverted commas) to raise money for the Bishop of London's Forty-Five Churches Fund - a request which his long-standing interest in the drama must have disposed him to comply with. No doubt his enthusiasm for his relatively new-found Anglicanism was also a motive; it was as if he had been asked to open a bazaar. George Bell, the Bishop of Chichester, who did more than anyone to make drama respectable in church, already had his eye on Eliot.

Martin Browne's book is enlightening on such matters as well as on his own background and that of Henzie, who contributes to the book though she died in 1973. Martin himself died while the book was being prepared for publication. Henzie Browne well has been the real theatrical motive force in the "Two in One" couple were. "If Martin had married another woman", she says, "he would, I believe, have had an utterly other career. Dog-collars and gaiters. . . . Martin himself says: 'I had always taken it for granted that I should ultimately be ordained.' He was at Eton, at Oxford for both instruction and worship became Pusey House"; there was also the OUDS. Then there was a period, with Henzie - of "workers' education" centring on the Folkhouse in Doncaster, followed by years in the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh, before "George Bell's call" came for him to be Director of Religious Drama in Chichester.

The poetic drama had been revived before; indeed one might say that it had been intermittently revived ever since

it actually existed, in the days of Shakespeare and Jonson. The success and novelty of the Restoration were really the comedy in prose, which had its own succession. The nineteenth century left a dead weight of more or less unproductive poetic plays to fill the less-read pages of the collected works of respectable poets. If we now consider that there was no poetic drama in the earlier twentieth century - unless you allow Yeats - this is not because no plays were written then; they were written in plenty. Gilbert Murray's translations of Greek plays were even a success at the box-office. The peculiarity of the new movement was its association with religion; and religious drama had, to all intents and purposes, existed only in the Middle Ages. If Eliot had not been enrolled, the new squib would have been as dead as any of the others. If Eliot's appetite had not been whetted by *The Rock*, the impetus he gave the movement would have had no great force. But he had written a religious "play" and wanted to write a play. It was Bell who invited him to write for the Canterbury Festival of Music and Drama, and so we have *Murder in the Cathedral* which, Eliot stipulated, Martin Browne was to direct. A success of a kind the play certainly was, and the role of the chorus was developed dramatically, in every sense of the term. If there was more of design than instinct in the management of the plot, as indeed in all Eliot's plays, that is hardly surprising in view of his lack of training in the theatre. A more radical difficulty, which affected the whole movement to promote a religious drama, was the lack of any widely and profoundly shared view of what the Christian religion was about. Eliot was certainly acutely aware of this, and that must account for the element of didacticism which is traceable not only in the *Murder* but in *The Family Reunion* and the later plays.

Eliot had long ago (in 1926) pronounced the view that "dramatic form may occur at various points along a line the termini of which are liturgy and realism"; the practical implication was that one should get away from Archer and Plinero. The difficulty about this theory was that the nature of the liturgical end of the line was obscure. A liturgy may have a public or private and publicly apprehended, if not entirely explicit, meaning. This the Christian liturgy could hardly be said to have had, even in the 1930s. The most widely diffused conception of religion

was that it was a matter of individual conscience. It is doubtful whether George Bell reflected profoundly on these matters, or even on the fact that, when the mystery plays were performed, they were the most appealing form of entertainment within reach. The subjectivity of religion, and the availability of other forms of public amusement, meant that the conditions for a religious drama, in the old sense, were simply not there. There had in fact been no such drama for four hundred years. A "revival" there could not be; what was in question was the invention of a drama which could attract a demure middle-class audience, a few intellectuals who still had some notion what the Church was about, and ultimately parish parties. For not his recruitment to the cause must have meant that his first incursions into major theatre took place under somewhat protected conditions.

Bell's initiative is said to have led to a "great outburst of poetry and religion mingled in drama" in the 1930s and 40s. Certainly some work was produced which would not have been produced without him. As an attempt to find a new way for the Church to address the world at large, the movement was a failure. "Drama is still on the periphery of the Church's work, and no doubt will stay there," Martin Browne concludes. "But the last half-century has seen them come together, for each other's good." It would be nice to think so, and there may be something in it; certainly drama might affect the presentation of religion. Browne points to *Waiting for Godot* (1955-6) as a watershed for the theatre. This success was not merely a matter of technique. The bleakness of the play corresponded to something in the audience's apprehension of the world in a way that Eliot's re-buses of sainthood and martyrdom did not. It was after this that the Church began that messianic with its liturgy of which we now have the disastrous results. In 1932 Bell, Browne, and others agreed that "the Authorized

Version of the Bible was especially suitable for text as well as subject of religious plays". *Aures tempus, aures mortuus*. The real change is slight. The principle to which Bell subscribed shows no more understanding of style than has been shown by the authors of the Alternative Service Book, who thought that an alleged "modern style" would bring home the bacon. The weakness is the mark of a profound intellectual fault. The defect, in 1932 as more recently, is in the Church's exposition of its meaning; if it could recover in that respect, style would look after itself. A liturgical drama requires a basis of common apprehension in author and audience, which means a bond of a kind we should be as likely to eschew as religious. Such a bond cannot have a Christian character in a society in which theology does not speak a language which is intelligible to the secular world. Nor, in this state of things, can a liturgy be rewritten: to talk of making it "intelligible" is either a laugh or a lie. Pending a new clarification of meanings, better try to understand what our ancestors were saying. And perhaps, meanwhile, we had better rely on such occasional insights into the truth as we may get from the odd dramatist incidentally, rather than look for a bishop who will again revive "religious drama".

The second (1980) volume of the new American periodical review (University Press of Virginia, \$20.00, 08139 0865 5) begins with an optimistic editorial preface recording the favourable response to the first issue, which provided a useful new forum for long and searching reviews of significant new works of literary scholarship. Several of the 1980 essays are concerned with English medieval texts, including a massive comparison of the recent B and C text editions of *Piers Plowman*, and there are essays on *Four Quartets*, *Ulysses* and "Women's Biographies of Woman" to give variety to over 400 pages of authoritative comment.

By Mark Casserley

PATRICIA CLEMENTS and JULIE GRINDLE (Editors):
The Poetry of Thomas Hardy
196pp. Vision Press. £10.95.
0 85478 334 2

The editors describe this book as "a contribution to the renewed conversation about Hardy's poems", and call them "a complex, large, experimental odd, rich, sometimes frustrating, compelling body of poems". The parade of adjectives is appropriate to the view of Hardy's poetry enforced by the book. So is the word "conversation", since the book is much like one different points of view are offered, each anxiously defining its individuality before being succeeded by the next; some passages don't seem much to the point, while others are more valuable; certain poems add even critical concepts like "the notion of a poem as a word or (line) repeated phrases in a conversation".

The editors appear to assume that the *Complete Poems* are to be read as a whole, and the problems of scale and of stubborn recalcitrance in the poetry as a whole find a response in the book. Indeed, Hardy's poems are to be read as a whole, and the problems of scale and of stubborn recalcitrance in the poetry as a whole find a response in the book. Indeed, Hardy's poems are to be read as a whole, and the problems of scale and of stubborn recalcitrance in the poetry as a whole find a response in the book.

poetry, stresses his artistry, his use of irony, and his deliberate use of an uncommon vocabulary. Her aim is to emphasize the sudden surprises his poetry can spring, although she is sometimes overzealous in defending Hardy against charges of incomprehension.

This charge is dealt with most effectively by close analysis, as in Ronald Marken's essay on Hardy's rhymes. His analyses of "Proud Songsters" and of "In front of the Landscapes" are particularly useful. So, too, are several of S.C. Newman's interpretations: she reveals Hardy's prosody to be a source of meaning in the poetry, and brings this out particularly well in discussing "Dora's gone to Ireland". In general, she is very good on the contrast between an emotionally reticent surface, and the depths revealed by prosody; all this comes out of her excellent analysis of "The Master and the Leaves".

Further stimulus is given by the variety of approaches to be found in the book. It is sometimes as if Hardy were being regarded from across different frontiers, all touching him at some isolated point. Thus he is examined, from the biographical point of view, in the context of his career from novelist to poet, in comparison with Meredith in his discussion of the relation of the poet to the world he inhabits. Hardy is also considered as a man responding to the ideas of his time, particularly in *The Dynasts*. Not all the approaches are convinc-

ing; some of them have to be kept up by leaping from poem to poem, rather than through a properly sustained argument. When such an essay ends, it does not conclude, but simply stops.

Often, however, a particular idea provides a useful key to some of the poems, even wispation. The essays by Patricia Ingham, Patricia Clements, and Jon Stallworthy are all useful in this way. Clements, for example, suggests, interestingly, that Hardy sees the mind as a shifting and alive, Ingham uses a discussion of Hardy's view of time to suggest that figures in his poetry are victims of events already long past. Stallworthy uses images of light, of shadow, and mirrors as a skeleton key to open up poems such as "The Pedigree" and "Honey-moon Time at an Inn". Amongst others, For Stallworthy, the central theme of Hardy's poems is "Love betrayed, eclipsed, or suffering", while Clements maintains that "Hardy's later work is dominated by its inquiry into the relation of the mind to the world it inhabits." It is perhaps one of the virtues of these essays that no consensus appears on this or other matters. Instead, "whole-seeing in poetry" to use Hardy's term, is encouraged in the reader, so that the poems become larger in scale, and reading them becomes a challenging experience. This carefully-planned book is more than the sum of its parts.

Reckoning with the Beast

Animals, Pain and Humanity in the Victorian Mind
JAMES TURNER

Victorianism was the seedbed of numerous concepts that have influenced British and American thought to this day. Many of these ideas have been thoroughly analysed by historians; others have not. From the latter category historian James Turner has chosen to focus on the great rise of Victorian concern for the humane treatment of animals, one of the most noteworthy flowerings of such sentiment in modern times and one that engaged the support of the rich and the powerful, of church dignitaries, peers and ministers, and the queen herself.

Was there more to this than the sentimentalism or quaint enthusiasm of a mawkish age? The author believes emphatically so, and in exploring the origins and manifestations of the phenomenon in England and America, he offers a fresh perspective on such varied aspects of Victorian culture as attitudes toward sex, pain, child labour, women, poverty and science.

Turner draws on extensive research in the archives of animal protection societies, literature of the period, and controversial writings on the treatment of animals. He argues that the dual shocks of industrialisation and urbanisation helped produce a deeper emotional identification with the natural world.

224 pp. £7.50

The Johns Hopkins University Press
Ely House, 37 Dover Street, London W.1.

Johns Hopkins University Press
Ely House, 37 Dover Street, London W.1.

Curbing the combatants

By Ian Brownlie

GEOFFREY BEST:
Humanity in Warfare
400pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £15.
0 297 77737 8

The history of the law of war is the most recalcitrant of subjects. The sources are diverse and it is far from easy to relate the legal-technical elements and the policy-making of governments and general staffs. Above all, the foundations of the subject consist of paradox and endemic official hypocrisy—that of wishing to appear to be part of a culture based on legality whilst keeping many military options open. To these elements must be added powerful cross-currents produced by major features of European and world history—revolutionary wars, the principle of self-determination and racialism.

Different facets of the subject have been examined in the specialist literatures, in more or less popular treatments of the Nuremberg trials, and in other works with a particular focus, concerning the history of the Second World War, submarines, economic blockade and so forth. Geoffrey Best has had the nerve, and the necessary skill as a professional historian, to produce a coherent general account of the history of the law of war which is compact without being superficial. The various threads are successfully woven together and the legal aspects are related to broad issues of policy and to the diplomatic context. The easy narrative and the rather jaunty style make for good reading. The varied learning thus translated for the reader is revealed in the footnotes, some of which contain sidelights as well as sources.

While the treatment is not held out as a comprehensive and systematic account of the subject, the book is built in such a way that the general picture emerges through the judicious selection of themes and episodes. The modern law of war has emerged from the thinking of the publicists of the eighteenth century (somehow awkwardly described as "the later enlightenment consensus") and (the multilateral diplomacy of the period 1864) to 1909. The principal themes are the distinguishing of combatants from non-combatants, the protection of civilians, the localization of conflict (the prohibition of weapons "calculated to cause unnecessary suffering" as the Hague Rules put it, and in general

the balance between "military necessity" (and reprisals) and the principles of limitation and restraint.

In his long third chapter, the best part of the book, the author skillfully explains the development of the "legislative foundations" (the various treaties) in relation to government, legal and service opinion and also by reference to contemporary experience, including the American Civil War and the Franco-Prussian War. The sequel is fairly familiar stuff but is well recounted for all that. The two World Wars subjected the law of war to appalling tests and the gaps and defects were, it was thought, attended to by further diplomatic efforts—the Geneva Conventions of 1929 and 1949. The themes are occupation and resistance, guerrilla warfare, economic and submarine warfare. In addition there is a well-researched account of the issues of aerial bombardment and "area bombing" (but no reference is made to the well-informed study by Hans Blix, then Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, *British Year Book of International Law*, 1978, nor to the assessment of the historian Henri Michel, *The Second World War*, 1978).

In the final period, from the end of the Second World War to the conclusion of the Additional Protocols of 1977, the law of war was revised in the new phase of international relations resulting from the appearance of many new states and the advent of small state and Third World diplomacy. Wars of Independence have had an impact and in this respect the Algerian War of Independence is seen to be more significant than the Vietnam War. The significance of nuclear weapons is pointed out in a somewhat perfunctory way and there are uneasy references to the place of nuclear weapons on the margin of the debate about the law of war since 1945 and "the bomb" as an eccentric place in the history of the law of war since 1945.

The book contains many excellent insights on matters more or less incidental to the main themes. One such appears in the introduction. In saying that the possibility of restraining man's inhumanity to man is a subject too important to be left to the lawyers, Best stresses the harmful consequences of the separation of the law of war, as a result of positivism and other influences, from the broad cultural themes represented by natural law. In his view it has fallen into the hands of the professionals, including the military men, and has suffered accordingly. In this context he sets the roots of humanitarian law in opposition to the "interest of states" and the thinking of state servants.

The passage concerned (page 17) is thought-provoking indeed. There is much of truth in it but it is also rather misleading. The elements of truth is the sinister side of modern legality as state-made (and treaty-made) law: it comes to be thought that only what is forbidden by the letter of the law is morally wrong. The silences and ambiguities of the written law are regarded as positive "license" to act. The misleading element is the apparent failure to see the danger, in presuming an opposition between the publicists and the officials and military men. Historically the groups have overlapped. Emmerich de Vattel and Hensel Lauterpacht (the latter had much to do with the preparation of Part III of the *British Manual of Military Law: The Law of War on Land*, 1958) were both concerned with the business of governments. Moreover, if the opinion of the publicists and the views of governments are accepted as entirely separate entities, the publicists will be even less amenable to the considerations of legal principle.

Given the modest compass of the book, the question of omissions must be approached mainly in terms of matters of emphasis and appreciation. There are two chief omissions which do not, it should be said, undermine the general presentation. First, there is a fail-

ure to appreciate the link between the *ius in bello* and *ius ad bellum*. With the doctrines of probabilism and the eclipse of simple views on the justice of wars it became easier to see that war needed to be regulated on the basis of reciprocity. The other effect was paradoxical: war came to be seen as a form of settlement of disputes and as an ultimate recourse of nations. Thus the legitimacy of war as a procedure was enhanced. This connection is ignored. The second omission is the question of the definition of "war" or, more recently, "armed conflict", as a general condition of the application of the laws of "war" or "armed conflict". These issues are not arcane inventions of lawyers but are important practically, not least in view of recent political assertions of broad doctrines of intervention, humanitarian intervention and the like.

In the broadest perspective certain issues stand out very clearly. In the first place, while Best does not ignore the significance of missile warfare and nuclear weaponry, there is a certain unwillingness to accept the radical problems thus presented. Although most wars will continue to be non-nuclear, the foreseeable quality of a nuclear conflict does rather change the categories. It follows that the limitation of conflict and the peaceful procedures for settlement of disputes are probably now more important than the law of war, important though that is.

There are two other considerations, which are related to each other. In a real sense such a book as this is written in a vacuum: the absence of a general perspective, an indication of the way in which legal controls as such operate, if at all, in major crises, and "legal controls" here is a necessary reference to the operation of national legal systems and not merely international law. The second consideration leads on from the first. The law of nations, like constitutional law within the state, is applied principally by the addressees of the rules—by governments. The application of the laws of war is a test of legality and not of some external "norm in the sky" called international law. These observations do not solve any problems but they are an aid to an improved focus. Whether we are discussing human rights, protection of civilians in time of armed conflict, legality begins at home. And, as Best points out, legality must be a general concern and not hived off as a specialized and professional concern.

This book is a good account of a difficult subject. The very choice of subject for a "general" audience is a matter for congratulation. These are not matters on which our highly conventional intellectual community really wishes to dwell. The equation: problems of state relations combined with nuclear armaments times statistical probability of serious conflict equals nuclear deterrence, is the spectre at the intellectual feast. The more doubt combine a parcel of this very readable and unyielding book with a rather more than usually urgent pursuit of the wine merchant's latest list.

The May Boy

This is a term, picked up locally, for a stray potato — I suppose, originally, for a child born under a hedge.

Poor, sheltered bastard, straggling out of the row and put of (kind) green where the earth is brown. And for tomorrow, beyond meditation, under the hanging plump, the ineluctable tubers. Which he has also intended, but not willing to let go over the garden tomorrow. And fruit remorselessly when fall.

C. H. Sisson

Heroes of the Horn

By Brian Montgomery

W. E. CROSSKILL:
The Two Thousand Mile War
224pp. Hale. £8.25.
0 7091 8591 X

By June 1940, nine months after World War Two began, Hitler's empire in Europe appeared invincible. He controlled Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway, Denmark, Holland and Belgium, and had recently overrun France, whose army had collapsed; only Britain, after her forces had been withdrawn from the continent, still defied him. At this convinced Mussolini that Germany would conquer England in a matter of weeks. If he joined Hitler immediately he would have an easy victory, with, above all, a sizable share of the spoils that would follow particularly in Africa. The Italian had strong naval and air forces in the Mediterranean with a large army in Libya, while in Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia they had a vast army of 300,000 men, well motorized, with 4000 guns, 300 tanks and armoured cars, and 200 aircraft.

This was the situation that faced General Wavell, British Commander-in-Chief in the Middle East, including East Africa, when Mussolini declared war on June 10. The enemy now seriously threatened Egypt, defended only by the rela-

tively small Western Desert force under Major General O'Connor, whose left flank and rear were at risk from that huge Italian army in the Horn of Africa. Furthermore there was virtually nothing to prevent the Italians invading Egypt to capture the port and harbour of Mombasa, from where submarines and surface raiders could attack the shipping lanes that carried our vital supplies, round South Africa, to Britain.

With this background Mr Crosskill relates how by November 1941, a so far little known East African campaign which ranged over 2000 miles, from the Sudan to the Indian Ocean and Northern Kenya to the Red Sea (giving this book its title), all these massive Italian forces were totally eliminated. If Mussolini had launched an immediate attack on Kenya he could have overrun the local garrison, only six battalions of King's African Rifles (KAR) with three light aircraft. But, so Mr Crosskill says, he did not. He ordered his armies in East Africa to take the offensive. When he did invade Kenya reinforcements from West and South Africa had already arrived and he faced 20,000 men. Thereafter boldness and mobility, and the leadership and driving force of much smaller British units, ensured the liquidation of Italian hegemony in East Africa.

The author has written his story, in a simple and attractive style, from the viewpoint of a white settler in East Africa, a farmer and reserve officer (Lieutenant) in the KAR. He acclaims British military and political leadership, but his greatest admiration is for his KAR askaris, who fought so loyally against alien white men, generally in terrible terrain, with perpetual lack of transport, supplies and water.

An interesting point about the KAR is that, pre-war, their uniform was unique: for the askaris wore an issued with footgear of any kind they carried bare-foot. And no one could outmatch them. Their British officers, only seven in each battalion, had first to learn how to march with soldiers who never tired, and were certainly never foot-sore. When the war came, 30 KAR battalions were raised and the War Office issued boots, "which must be worn".

This drawing of a French soldier (1916) which is signed by the army censor who passed it as well as the artist was included in the exhibition (reviewed in last week's *Commentary*) at the Maas Gallery, London, of the work, 1905-1930, of Eric Kennington. Kennington, the son of the successful Victorian artist Thomas Benjamin Kennington, and a distinguished war artist in both World Wars is perhaps best known for his illustrations to T. E. Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*.



The adversative life

By Lorna Sage

ERNEST HEMINGWAY:
Selected Letters 1917-1961
Edited by Carlos Baker
948pp. Granada. £15.
0 246 11576 9

MICHAEL S. REYNOLDS:
Hemingway's Reading 1910-1940
A Commentary and Inventory
236pp. Princeton University Press.
£10.70.
0 691 06447 4

The public Hemingway, said Edmund Wilson in *The Wound and the Bow*, was "the worst-invented character to be found in the author's work." At one time, he only had Hemingway up to 1939 to go on, but the public image one war, two divorces, two best sellers, a Nobel Prize and a final safari later would have amply confirmed his judgment. Everyone probably has their own identikit travesty of the "world figure": sparring with a giant tuna or Marlene Dietrich, surrounded by a litter of spent cartridges or empty bottles, growling expatriate telegraphese. . . . The legend all along threatened to dominate the work, and, as Wilson suggested, Hemingway collaborated habitually in its making.

As early as 1927 he was protesting to his publishers about the glamorized self creeping into the personal publicity. "It would be a great favour to me," he wrote to Maxwell Perkins at Scribner, "if we could lay off the Biography."

And anytime I break a leg or have my jewels stolen or get elected to the Académie Française or killed in the bull ring or drink myself to death I'll inform you officially.

The melodrama wouldn't be denied. "From the very first spring up," he added shrewdly, "I think they'll handle the other publicity." And indeed, as Carlos Baker painstakingly demonstrated in his biography, and points out again in his introduction to the *Letters*, Hemingway lied himself in a routine, laudatory way, while bitterly resenting accusations of being a phony. By a curious irony, the psychopathologist of a *General* took to impersonating him — signing books, staying for 2 months at the Explorers Club, taking young men to breakfast etc. — as Hemingway complained, "I was with uncharacteristic mildness." But Professor Baker doesn't seem to think this impostor in any way responsible for the legend. The legend grew out of the "true" (a favourite phrase); Hemingway challenged credulity on his own account.

The effect of this enormous selection from the letters is to take one behind the scenes, with the PR in process. He must have been — anybody would have to be — a more various, flexible, hesitant personality than the monotonously macho figure we know. And of course he is, though not, at first, startlingly so. There is boredom of a different order in evidence — the restless irritation he felt when short of objects for excitement or resentment (letters as a way of exercising energy). There is, too, a near-constant keening for male company, always verging on a challenge:

I wish to hell you and Charles could come out here to hunt.

So far I've killed two damned big old cattle eating bears — I with one shot at 90 yards — never moved — got other two shots at 35 yards, got up after 1st one and I nailed him dead.

There are lots of grouse, ducks, geese. Nobody else will be hunting here this fall. I wish the hell you'd come.

You must have had the top in excitement with the big war. With the hell it been there.

He on the edge of self-parody a good deal of the time, and knows it. He jokes about his own tough talking ("Glad you got them out, Elias never helped me") and his insider's expertise ("I've got on a Lithuanian if he can tell me, but like a lot of jokers he doesn't really know").

There are no subjects that I would not set about if the fact was funny enough (but as, liking wing shooting, I would shoot my own mother if she went in coveys and had a strong flight).

Professor Baker suggests we see the letter-writing as play: "Play was the antidote that made his serious writing possible by providing periods of relaxation between bouts of the most intensive application." But play was a matter of "bouts" too. He was a dangerous creature, as one literary friend after another (Dos Passos, MacLeish, Fitzgerald) famously found out. Enemies hardly fared worse. His account of his fist-fight with Wallace Stevens in February 1936 ("But you mustn't tell this to anybody") is full of fun, and serves incidentally to illustrate some of his favourite off-duty games with language:

Only trouble was that first three times put him down I still had my glasses on. Then took them off at the insistence of the judge who wanted to see a good clean fight without glasses in it and after I took them off Mr Stevens hit me flush on the jaw with his Sunday punch bam like that. And this is very funny. Broke his hand in two places. I shouldn't write you this but news being scarce your way and I know you really won't tell anybody will you really absolutely seriously. Because otherwise I am a bastard to write it.

His Parisian friend from the 1920s, Sara Murphy, seems to have been the recipient of this sporting monologue merely because he had to tell someone, and because, perhaps, telling a woman who anyway had troubles of her own ("Poor Sara. I'm sorry you had such a bad time. These are the bad times.") wasn't giving the game away, didn't really count.

Readers in search of intimate dialogue will be, mostly, disappointed. There is an effect of intimacy in the correspondence, but of a very particular kind. Professor Baker once pointed out, a propos of Hemingway's relations with his great literary predecessors, that "what he seeks to imitate is not the texture, it is the stature of the great books and the great pictures he is going on to see. He is imitating the stature in the letters too: gradually it's the narrative content of the particular 'bouts' one is impressed with, than the combativeness itself. He measures himself continuously against the world — literally at moments ('Mr Stevens is 6 feet 2, weighs 225 pounds'). Indirectly almost always. In this sense, the book does offer, as it promises, 'both a self-portrait and an autobiography', a life-long, immensely ingenious, terribly weary process of self-definition.

It is the most intimate consideration. To be behind the scenes, with the PR in process. He must have been — anybody would have to be — a more various, flexible, hesitant personality than the monotonously macho figure we know. And of course he is, though not, at first, startlingly so. There is boredom of a different order in evidence — the restless irritation he felt when short of objects for excitement or resentment (letters as a way of exercising energy). There is, too, a near-constant keening for male company, always verging on a challenge:

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There are no subjects that I would not set about if the fact was funny enough (but as, liking wing shooting, I would shoot my own mother if she went in coveys and had a strong flight).

However, as even this outgoing orderly statement — with its uncharacteristic

array of semi-colons) reveals, the over-les between work and play remains a very problematic one. Professionals become convinced that he somehow provoked the infrahuman world into retaliation, and it's hard, reading the letters, to avoid that feeling.

In the last years, punch-drunk, Hemingway wrote a lot to academic critics. Professor Baker himself comes in for an ironic mention ("really baffles me. Do you suppose he can can himself into thinking I would put a symbol into anything on purpose?"). Still fighting for the chance to fight on, he forms a most improbable long-distance friendship with the aged Bernard Berenson, and casts himself in the role of apprentice-boy all over again:

... In some ways I am your pup from being educated, a little, by you through the books, the goddamned beautifully worked-out lovely books. I was a Bergamo boy before I ever heard your name, and I had not heard it only because I had previously neglected being brought up properly. But I am sort of your pup . . .

He had, however, been thinking for some years about posterity. "We ought," he wrote to Charles Scribner in 1949, "to keep copies of our letters like Mr Lord Byron and Murray . . ."

He doesn't, as must be clear, do very well out of this comparison. If one were to stage the championship bout in question, he'd undoubtedly lose bloodily — on (all) points, but particularly on his inability to change styles, and his dogged refusal to see his myth of himself as a myth. Byron's letter-life and his poetry came together triumphantly in *Don Juan*: which is another way of saying that the letters share in his full creative life. This isn't so with Hemingway, despite Professor Baker's generous and discriminating selection, because he wasn't, actually, the kind of artist he wants to be in the letters — garrulous, reckless, prolific. One effect of this volume will be — or should be — to complicate the relationship between the work and the life, and to distinguish the modernist craftsman (who learned from Stein, Joyce and Pound, and who wrote at most 400-odd words a day) from his noisy champion.

Hemingway's *Reading 1910-1940*, "An Inventory," written by Michael S. Reynolds and a friendly computer known as OCLC for short, also serves to separate Hemingway's actual processes of writing from the residually anti-mythical Professor Reynolds takes a mildly perverse pleasure in the unheroic nature of his undertaking: to list — or rather to programme OCLC to list — the books Hemingway borrowed, bought, requested from his publishers, etc, before leaving Key West for Cuba in 1940 (Cuban acquisitions are still inaccessible). The major source is Hemingway's own Key West inventory from his high school; borrowed books from Shakespeare and Co (1922-24 missing); the letters; and Scribner's records. The message, carrying on the argument of Professor Reynolds' book on *A Farewell to Arms* (Hemingway's *First War*, 1976), is that Hemingway made his books out of books. Or, as Professor Reynolds testifies: "It is this, with full anti-heroic emphasis: 'Hemingway's reading was more important to his art and in his life than Coleridge's was to his.'"

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Bird saw the color of Hemingway's blood. They had just reached Genoa and, signed into the hotel when a hot-water heater exploded while Ernest was taking a bath, wounding his chest and arms with bits of flying metal. The cuts were superficial but the effect was gory. The bath towels, said Bird, looked like those in the loser's locker room after a championship fight.

Hemingway couldn't have put it better himself. Professor Baker seems to have become convinced that he somehow provoked the infrahuman world into retaliation, and it's hard, reading the letters, to avoid that feeling.

In the last years, punch-drunk, Hemingway wrote a lot to academic critics. Professor Baker himself comes in for an ironic mention ("really baffles me. Do you suppose he can can himself into thinking I would put a symbol into anything on purpose?"). Still fighting for the chance to fight on, he forms a most improbable long-distance friendship with the aged Bernard Berenson, and casts himself in the role of apprentice-boy all over again:

... In some ways I am your pup from being educated, a little, by you through the books, the goddamned beautifully worked-out lovely books. I was a Bergamo boy before I ever heard your name, and I had not heard it only because I had previously neglected being brought up properly. But I am sort of your pup . . .

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and T. E. Lawrence and Byron; that he read criticism and reviews voraciously (Professor Reynolds suggests future exegetes must look for feedback); and that before, during and after an adventure (eg Africa) he would immerse himself in the "literature".

The obvious pride and pleasure that Professor Reynolds (if not OCLC) takes in his labours perhaps derives in part from revealing Hemingway to have been, in the best Borgesian sense, a phony. But his main interest is in the tradition of criticism — "Here he is, the man who was there" (Harry Levin) — which felt itself trapped in the identification of Hemingway with his fictional protagonists, and most obviously in the symbol-and-irony merchants who correspond, as it were, to those who look in the biography for secrets. I had better repeat his own version of his "credo":

I am particularly bored with psychoanalysis. We must resume the practice of the trade for which we were trained. . . . Let us put aside those burning questions of Margaret Macomber's marksmanship, of symbolism at Killmanjaro, and earn our pay the hard way. . . .

In a sense, Professor Baker's Hemingway career follows a similar trajectory: from symbols in the 1950s (*The Writer as Artist*) through the biography to the "hard" data of the letters. And it is, undoubtedly, a relief to have a bankrupt myth dissolve into words, words, words. Though the new scholarly "hard way" has its own bankruptcy built in. One is left thoughtfully comparing the warmth of Professor Reynolds's relationship with his computer ("the trade for which we were trained") with his studied coolness towards Hemingway, who now dissolves into a squall in the history of the literary squall.

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BODLEY HEAD

commentary

Cleaning up

By Antonia Phillips

Robert Rauschenberg
Tate Gallery

The Tate Gallery's retrospective confirms the suspicion that Robert Rauschenberg's best work was done in the 1950s and 1960s. His fame rests upon some startling paintings and "composites", many of which can be seen at the Tate. Some of these, like "Black Market" (a painting linked to an openable suitcase on the floor), or "Prigim" (a painting with a chair stuck to it), or "White Painting" (a triptych of white-painted canvases) cry out for audience collaboration - if only by the spectator's casting a shadow - Rauschenberg's attempt to shrink the gap between life and art. Others, like "Bed" or "Canyon", pursue to anarchic lengths the preoccupation with surface and the tension between it and represented space, however "flattened", which has characterized so much twentieth-century painting. Rauschenberg uses the plane as background, from which collaged fabrics, smeared with paint, and attached objects seem to spill or strain outwards towards the viewer, as if to incorporate him into the picture-space, which is not at all "behind" the canvas.

Missing from the Tate show (it is a reduced version of an exhibition which has been touring Germany for many months) are two notorious works, "Odalisque" and "Monogram". The latter, featuring a stuffed goat encircled by a tyre, was aptly seen by Robert Hughes to be "one of the great icons of modern culture: the Satyr in the Sphinx". By now, of course, the impact of these early works has weakened, and they have acquired a certain (not inappropriate) tawdriness. When they were first seen they offered a welcome relief to the tortured emotionalism (and sometimes pious cant) of the then swelling ranks of abstract expressionists.

No amount of critical ingenuity can invest Rauschenberg's 1970s work with anything more than fleeting curiosity-value and wit. Gone is the brushiness, energy and humour of the earlier works, and the extravagant, messy manipulation of paint, rags, paper: what is left is something faint, uncertain, uncharacteristically hygienic. I have in mind the "Haystack" and "Jamaica" series and the mixed-media combines (the "Mollusc" series, "Paycock Cascade", "Bismarck", "Carver", "Narwhal"). Less house-trained (in Brian O'Doherty's phrase), but equally banal are the large works made of old cardboard boxes, either flattened, cut up, backed and hung on the walls like huge empty maps ("Lake Placid", "Glacier", "Yarns From New England"), or variously stacked and coated with grey sand, in some cases pierced by a pole or with a dash of "dayglow" orange ("Early Egyptian Series").

The materials with which Rauschenberg works do not function merely as the stuff out of which he creates images; they are meant to be identified for what they are, and so, in an attenuated sense, they come to represent themselves, to point as part of the content of the image. Much of this material - detritus and junk collected from the streets - is highly evocative, and acquires a vigour and pathos characteristic of New York. In this respect Rauschenberg's art has a strong nostalgic element. Ironically celebrating the American urban scene through its debris, and its use of mass media images, asserting a native orientation which became so typical of the art of the 1960s.

In the 1960s, also, Rauschenberg turned to the political and social scene for his subject-matter. Especially impressive are the mimicking, predominantly black paintings in which Raus-



Rauschenberg's 'Female Figure (Blue Print)', c1949, from the exhibition reviewed here.

chenberg first used silkscreen techniques for transferring photographic images on to canvas ("Crocus", "Overcast", "Paycock", etc). The graphic work tends to be more decorative; second-hand imagery, collaged or scratched pencil work, or smudged with paint, emphasizing the artist's constant preoccupation with the traces of things and activities - in the early "Erased de Kooning Drawing" we see the traces of the drawing and of the erasing.

Because collage is such an important part of Rauschenberg's method, some of his pictures, drawings especially, are oddly inconsequential: the profuse, discrete images assembled together often resist unification at any level, and remain persistently associative, witty, anecdotal. 'I have a peculiar kind of focus', Rauschenberg once said, 'I tend to see everything in sight.' In keeping with this characteristic is his long-time interest in photography. In 1952 Edward Steichen bought one of his photographs for the Museum of Modern Art, six years before it acquired any other sort of work by him. Nearly thirty years later, Rauschenberg's current work, showing at the Sonnabend Gallery in New York, consists entirely of assemblages of black-and-white photographs, many of them beautiful, and there is not a lack of paint anywhere. In a sense, this concentration on photography is not surprising, given the gradual changes in the artist's output over the years. Although photography lacked for him the potential for physical involvement in the medium offered by painting, Rauschenberg had been self-consciously obsessed with it to have contemplated the idea of photographing the whole of the United States foot by foot.

The Poetry Society has announced that the 1981 National Poetry Competition is to be judged by Roger McGough, Edwin Morgan and Peter Porter. Entry forms are available from the National Poetry Centre, 21 Bar's Court Square, SW5.

Sketching out

By David Bindman

Sculptors' Drawings over Six Centuries
The Drawing Center, New York

For lovers of drawings New York is a paradise at the moment. Most of the museums are showing them in one way or another, and the Drawing Center in the SoHo area below Greenwich Village has (until June 20) a notable display of sculptors' drawings from the fifteenth century to the present day. From the point of view of quality it is surpassed by the Morgan Library, which has simply put out the cream of its old master drawings collection with a sprinkling of recent and promised acquisitions which maintain the standard of the earlier collection. Many of the greatest names in European art are represented by large and impeccably authentic examples. Only a few of the earlier drawings do not bear a firm attribution, but even these are of surpassing rarity and quality. While one could never tire of such marvellous things, in the end their very probability becomes a little dispiriting, evoking a banker's dream: a world without risk.

The Drawing Center exhibition, by contrast, conjures up not a princely *Schatzkammer* but a sculptor's studio where drawings work towards the execution of the final piece or are evidence for the look like. A few of the drawings would indeed hold their own in the Morgan Library, but quality is not the only criterion applied, nor is precision of attribution. Yet it is an excellent example of how a relatively modest show can be informative and stimulating without being overtly didactic. The catalogue, by Colin Eiler with the assistance of his students, points to the different ways in which sculptors have used drawings throughout the centuries, not only in preparation for specific works but as part of their habitual modes of expression. The problem is not so much that many sculptors' drawings have been lost but that their survival has been so uneven. Some sculptors, like Michelangelo, Bouchardon, Flaxman and Alfred Stevens, have left behind hundreds of studies, others practically none, either because they did not do very many or because their work was discarded and lost. It is greatly to Professor Eisler's credit that he does not avoid the difficulties caused by the loss of so much, and he raises, to give one example, the question of sculptors' drawing in the quattrocento by showing among others a highly contentious drawing from Rennes attributed to Donatello.

It is inevitable that finished drawings of projected sculptures should predominate in the earlier periods, before a taste for the rapid sketch had become widespread. One obvious exception was Michelangelo, whose mere scraps were treasured at the time, and the tiny but searching "David and Goliath", ironically on view at the Morgan Library not the Drawing Center. In fact there are few drawings in the show before the end of the eighteenth century which are concerned with working out the attitude of the figure or figures. A sheet of studies made in the 1730s by the Florentine sculptor Foggini shows a group from two viewpoints, but even these lack the sense of thinking aloud on paper which characterizes the brilliant working drawings for "Hercules and Lichas" by Canova at the end of the century. On the other hand, many of the finished drawings are of remarkable power, and the great late Bernini force one to engage with that remarkable mind. In some cases it is impossible to imagine the final result matching the splendour of the drawing: Pajou's conception of the tomb of the Duc de Belle-Isle is so dramatic and atmospheric that one wonders how he could ever have hoped to express it in marble.

The freedom of the Canova sketch heralds a century in which sculptors' drawings often express a sense of freedom forever restrained by the public need for a degree of finish, in some of the drawings by French sculptors, even those by the dullest salon favourites, there is often a manic energy. If Carpeaux's rapid sketches are gestural in the extreme, then the Rodin exhibited seems to float completely free of substance and sculptural form itself. The selection of twentieth-century drawings is catholic enough to show not only developments from Rodin's drawings, but also the work of sculptors - not always fashionable - who have been prepared to retreat and build on older foundations. It is fitting that the exhibition should end with David Smith, whose dedication to drawing was at the heart of his sculpture.

The ease with which the exhibition moves across the invisible barrier between the "Old Masters" and modern art reflects its unusual nature of the Drawing Center, which is concerned primarily with the encouragement of works on paper by contemporary artists. The Sculptors' Drawing show is one of an imaginative series of historical exhibitions (previous ones have been about music, and architecture) drawings which tend to alternate with those by relative unknowns. The gallery itself, in a dark, one very large room entered straight off the street, its ambience is both relaxed and serious, very much part of an area where artistic experiment is encouraged and evaluated. The effect of such a setting is not to make the older drawings look out of place, but to emphasize the essential continuity of the sculptor's concerns.

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Cats and dogs

By A. L. Rowse

Cats
New London Theatre

I am afraid that I am the last man to be a theatre critic: I sit there ingenious and entranced, like a visitor to fairyland or Walt Disney land, a perfect stage for theatre people, producers, actors, all of them. Perhaps that is not a bad frame of mind in which to enter the world of children and animals, and to appreciate such works as Ravel and Colette's *L'enfant et les sorcières*, with its climactic "Miaow!" above the orchestra. No one ever wrote more understandingly of cats - those perfect wipers' pets - than Colette.

Actually T. S. Eliot was equally a dog-man: in his last years he and his wife Valerie were addicted to Alsatians. I have always thought what luck Eliot had as a writer, after the early struggle to establish himself. Geoffrey Faber, for whose children these adorable poems were written, once said to me, "If I have accomplished anything, it is to have saved Tom Eliot for literature". Well, the luck continues and deservedly so. The new information we derive from Valerie Eliot's programme notes makes us look forward with all the more excitement to the first volume of his letters (we know what a scholar she is from her edition of *The Waste Land* texts) which we may expect within the year.

However, fossils of his intention remain in this show in the section "Of the Awful Battle of the Pekes and the Plagues", which provides a splendid living scene. And now we learn from Eliot's programme notes - without help the music could hardly have been so good - that Eliot did originally have in mind some kind of structure bringing cats and dogs together, but that it would not work out. It is a wonderful achievement of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Trevor Nunn to have found a form for it their way. And from the literary point of view fascinating, for it makes use of three unrelated poems as well as a new character, Grishabella (the Glamour Cat, Brian Pugh); Eliot didn't publish the poem about her because he thought it was too good for children. On the steps she is given an important linking part, haunting music which almost induces me to tears. The music, unlike so much contemporary music, is full of melody and will prove as memorable, I dare say, as that of *My Fair Lady*, which Eliot admired. Old Deuteronomy (Brian Blessed) too is developed into a continuing part, which links the structure together and proves a most popular character, with the nostalgic and nostalgic that never fail with an English audience. So too with the top of the way under the pounding beat of "O Peaceful England", sung by a girl dressed as Britannia at a "Tipperary Evening". With the communication channels blocked by censorship and propaganda, the women are cut off from all knowledge of their men. Eventually, goaded by rumour, they besiege the mayor, demanding information. Mass female agitation uncovers mass male slaughter: almost all the Pals are dead.

While presenting vivid individuals, this play is very much concerned with the collective. One of the recruits, Tom, believes in communal progress towards a co-operative Utopia. Another, more religious, sees a congregation of the faithful beatifically progressing towards the New Jerusalem. Female solidarity is preached and practised. And Accrington's working-class community - a noisy, noisy, noisy - shows of helping-out and popping-in - shows another kind of mutual support system.

Set against it is May, the play's central character. Where others believe in banding together for progress or survival, she subscribes to the doctrine of self-help. Profit-conscious, pushingly industrious, she could have been seen as just a callous grabber. Whelan turns her into something far more interesting: a woman trapped

inside a code that has been shaped and hardened by the pressure of her background, unable to break through to the human contact she both wants and needs. Painfully aware of her emotional constriction, May, though self-reliant, is never self-satisfied, as Janet Dale's robustly moving performance brings out beautifully.

Depicting the Lancashire of 1914-16, *The Accrington Pals* seems modelled on the kind of drama produced by that time and place: it is extremely reminiscent of the "Manchester school". Hard-working May - strong-minded and with fiercely protective feelings towards the man she loves - has clear affinities with Maggie of *Hobson's Choice*. One scene could be an acknowledgement of Brighouse's influence. Brighouse's play centres on the making and mending of boots in the *Accrington Pals* factory. May is entranced when Tom cobbles her boots for her. Eva, the most emancipated of the women, resembles another "Manchester" heroine - Fanny, the healthily candid heroine of *Hindle Wakes*. And as in Houghton's play, there is here a sense of exuberant, slightly surprised relief as prudish and bigoted restrictions start to give.

Like Brighouse and Houghton's plays, *The Accrington Pals* aims to put on the stage a busy reconstruction of Lancashire working-class life. It succeeds admirably. The dialogue rings true: it has the authentic bluntness of down-to-earth, colourless, and rather flat, old speech-patterns that typifies older Lancashire talk. Characterization is strong, and strengthened by a number of quite excellent performances. Splendidly overcoming the Warehouse's limitations of space, the production energetically builds up a lifelike impression of a back-to-back community, with its raucous streets and overspilling homes. Boxes of fruit and veg are heavily trampled over the sheds. Inside a convincing-looking kitchen, a big kettle boils on a hefty range. Sturdily three-dimensional, the sets have a satisfying solidity, perfectly in keeping with that of the play.

commentary

Oohs and ahs

By Virginia Llewellyn Smith

The Forest
The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

In a stuffy saloon crammed with icons a rich landowner, Raissa Pavlovna, is selling off her ancestral woodlands to a canny merchant. She might use the cash to marry her impoverished ward Aleksusha to an effete young nobleman, Aleksei; but Raissa, fiftish and just about adequately preserved, has her eye on the lad herself. Meanwhile, out in the fresh air, Aleksusha meets her boyfriend, son of said merchant, and disconcerts him with portentous claims about being drawn to water, to the lake.

It sounds like *The Seagull* out of *The Cherry Orchard*, dredged by *A Month in the Country*. But *The Forest*, written in 1871, two decades after Turgenev's play and when Chekhov was still a child, was aimed at a different audience. Alexander Ostrovsky (1823-86) wrote for the Moscow merchant classes among whom he lived most of his life. Chekhov grew up in a similar milieu, and reveals its influence in his early fiction; but as Chekhov became increasingly experimental he lost touch with the old-fashioned, conservative, unworried, merchant attitudes. Ostrovsky never did: he gave his chosen public what it wanted, and became Russia's most successful dramatist.

With crazy energy Neschashtivsev runs through the whole spectrum of drama. Barbara Leigh-Hunt's Raissa, who's been captivating her immediate entourage horribly effectively in the combined roles of *grande dame* and winsome widow, meets her match in a real actor. Neschashtivsev creates a Dostoevskian *skandal* (*The Devils*, interestingly, was written about this time); he gets his hands on her money - and gives it away again, finally, to Aleksusha. It is a gesture which infuriates her. But Neschashtivsev, his cry from the vaudeville stage, whom Neschashtivsev has co-opted into playing his valet. Richard Pasco acts his parts with a reasonable sanity that perfectly counterbalances Alan Howard's extravaganzas. The supporting cast are all too evidently and comically unwilling, or incapable, of playing in Neschashtivsev's play. Best of all perhaps is Janine Duvitski's drooping Aleksusha, whose earnest romance affords Neschashtivsev his finest opportunities. The lovers want to run away to Saratov (Moscow audiences would have laughed at that), but, lacking the means, Aleksusha does jump into the lake. Neschashtivsev, happening to be at hand, rescues her, and the incident inspires in him a vision of Aleksusha as tragic actress. She listens to his manic fantasizing, bedraggled and wary; a damp soul never sprouted more despondently, or with so little prospect of ever blooming. The scene is brilliantly funny.

The Forest concludes with a rather trite summing-up: who pushed her in? - nasty rich lady! who pulled her out? - penniless declassé actor. But Neschashtivsev has a last joke up his sleeve which helps dispel any idea that the play might really be about Russian social conditions. Its only message is that if spirit and vitality are not to be found anywhere else, they are still to be found in the theatre.

That proposition is splendidly vindicated by Adrian Noble's light-hearted production and the lively translation by Jeremy Brooks and Kitty Hunter-Blair, which copes ably with shades of dialogue from the pretentious to the demotic. And if some members of the cast seem uncertain which rhythm accent to stick with, does it really matter, in the Russian forest?

The Forest concludes with a rather trite summing-up: who pushed her in? - nasty rich lady! who pulled her out? - penniless declassé actor. But Neschashtivsev has a last joke up his sleeve which helps dispel any idea that the play might really be about Russian social conditions. Its only message is that if spirit and vitality are not to be found anywhere else, they are still to be found in the theatre.

Raissa Pavlovna, so one of her gentleman sycophants tells us, has made the district's moral atmosphere fragrant with her virtues. This fine lady's blatant hypocrisy and lust for a boy half her age, and the cringing servility of nobly bred Aleksei, awed by her riches, convey something of the moral atmosphere of Ostrovsky's drama: a little thick, it emanates, one feels, from the coolings and ahings of complacent burghers, very comfortably seated and faintly titillated.

Ostrovsky is usually represented in the West by plays like *The Thunderstorm* and *The Poor Bride*, melodramas of merchant society portraying heroines a cut above their money-grubbing associates, which despite their worthy implications are bound to strike us now as sentimental and a little flat. But *The Forest* is different. Into the lug steps Neschashtivsev, Raissa's long-lost nephew, whose name implies his profession of tragic actor, and whose arrival shakes people up a bit. Chatsky, fulfilling the same function in Gribodov's *Woe from Wit*, is deemed insane; Ostrovsky has little of Gribodov's verbal wit or intellectual sophistication, but his touch of genius is to give us a hero who really is insane.

When Alan Howard's Neschashtivsev hits the boards, they tilt so violently that nothing stays on the same plane. At first sight the lonesome cowboy, all sombre strength and laconic drawl, he slips rapidly, well-oiled, from one gear to another. Alan Howard's timing and infinitesimal change of tone as Neschashtivsev recounts how a great director said to him "We... must... all... die" brings the banal to the brink of the superb - and holds it there, in what is perhaps the evening's supreme moment of comedy.

With crazy energy Neschashtivsev runs through the whole spectrum of drama. Barbara Leigh-Hunt's Raissa, who's been captivating her immediate entourage horribly effectively in the combined roles of *grande dame* and winsome widow, meets her match in a real actor. Neschashtivsev creates a Dostoevskian *skandal* (*The Devils*, interestingly, was written about this time); he gets his hands on her money - and gives it away again, finally, to Aleksusha. It is a gesture which infuriates her. But Neschashtivsev, his cry from the vaudeville stage, whom Neschashtivsev has co-opted into playing his valet. Richard Pasco acts his parts with a reasonable sanity that perfectly counterbalances Alan Howard's extravaganzas. The supporting cast are all too evidently and comically unwilling, or incapable, of playing in Neschashtivsev's play. Best of all perhaps is Janine Duvitski's drooping Aleksusha, whose earnest romance affords Neschashtivsev his finest opportunities. The lovers want to run away to Saratov (Moscow audiences would have laughed at that), but, lacking the means, Aleksusha does jump into the lake. Neschashtivsev, happening to be at hand, rescues her, and the incident inspires in him a vision of Aleksusha as tragic actress. She listens to his manic fantasizing, bedraggled and wary; a damp soul never sprouted more despondently, or with so little prospect of ever blooming. The scene is brilliantly funny.

Like Brighouse and Houghton's plays, *The Accrington Pals* aims to put on the stage a busy reconstruction of Lancashire working-class life. It succeeds admirably. The dialogue rings true: it has the authentic bluntness of down-to-earth, colourless, and rather flat, old speech-patterns that typifies older Lancashire talk. Characterization is strong, and strengthened by a number of quite excellent performances. Splendidly overcoming the Warehouse's limitations of space, the production energetically builds up a lifelike impression of a back-to-back community, with its raucous streets and overspilling homes. Boxes of fruit and veg are heavily trampled over the sheds. Inside a convincing-looking kitchen, a big kettle boils on a hefty range. Sturdily three-dimensional, the sets have a satisfying solidity, perfectly in keeping with that of the play.

Set against it is May, the play's central character. Where others believe in banding together for progress or survival, she subscribes to the doctrine of self-help. Profit-conscious, pushingly industrious, she could have been seen as just a callous grabber. Whelan turns her into something far more interesting: a woman trapped

inside a code that has been shaped and hardened by the pressure of her background, unable to break through to the human contact she both wants and needs. Painfully aware of her emotional constriction, May, though self-reliant, is never self-satisfied, as Janet Dale's robustly moving performance brings out beautifully.

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Edited by John Leach
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Leslie Stevenson

This reader was prepared as a companion to the author's *Seven Theories of Human Nature*. Part I offers a selection of views about human nature from ancient religious traditions. Part II compares Plato with excerpts from other high points of Greek, Roman, and medieval philosophy. Part III traces the search for a scientific theory of human nature, and Part IV shows some of the progress that twentieth-century philosophers have made in dealing with philosophical and methodological perplexities in the very idea of a science of man. Paper covers £5.95

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Nirad C. Chaudhuri

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Oxford University Press

Art in Poland: ambiguity. . .

By Michael Irwin

Rough Treatment
Camden Plaza Cinema.

The management of the Camden Plaza presents a consistently challenging series of foreign-language films, and assists patrons by displaying a selection of newspaper and magazine articles that might help to put the current offering in perspective. In the case of Andrzej Wajda's *Rough Treatment* a number of these reviews, though enthusiastic, show traces of uncertainty, as though the critic were not quite sure of himself. Since in outline, at least, the story concerned is a simple one it seems worth trying to locate the source of the unease.

The hero of the film is a Polish foreign correspondent specializing in South American affairs. A man of integrity and courage, he has won sufficient reputation, both as journalist and author, to rank as a household name in Poland. We see him first in a television interview, in which he appears able and authoritative, if a little too pleased with his way of life. All unknown to him, however, even as the programme is transmitted his wife is preparing to desert him for another man, taking her infant daughter with her. This proves to be the first of a series of blows, professional and domestic. On a panel to select the book of the year he is out-manoeuvred by his wife's lover, a febrile young arriviste, "a creep in glasses". A course of university lectures he has been scheduled to give is abruptly cancelled without consultation. The editor of his newspaper suddenly withdraws the chance of an assignment abroad. All these rebuffs, and several more, he accepts only under defiant protest. A friend warns him that he may be in danger of losing his instinct for self-preservation. In the same stubborn spirit he refuses to concede that his marriage cannot be saved: if his wife is to divorce him she must prove his guilt. He speaks out boldly, but with each rebuff he loses ground, is shifted towards destruction.

To a western audience the tantalizing, and to some extent frustrating, aspect of the film is an essential ambiguity of stylistic level. Wajda is known to be a dissident artist; any work of his is likely to contain encoded criticism of the ruling regime in Poland. Recent events make possible hints of this kind doubly interesting. *Rough Treatment* was made in 1978; might it not contain premonitions of the troubles to erupt two years later? It would seem that the course of "treatment" depicted might indeed be suffered by an individual in today's Poland, as in Wajda's film actual events? Does the journalist, perhaps, stand for Wajda himself? Such considerations provide an incentive to interpret the story in fairly literal terms.

On the other hand, the hero's sufferings are not unlike those of Kafka's K. Should they not be viewed more abstractly? Wajda has always been lavishly in metaphor. Certain scenes or episodes seem to work almost solely at the figurative level. At a low point in the hero's fortunes a student named Agnieszka moves in with him. He later claims to know neither who she is nor what she does — a reasonable assertion, given her reluctance to speak. When his teenage daughter flies in from boarding-school in an attempt to effect a reconciliation between her parents, she immediately orders: "Agata, out! Clear out of here! This is my father's house." The intruder who has been squatting half-naked on a

mat with muffs over her ears, pats the daughter's cheek and departs immediately, still without a word. Her only utterance proves to be the final speech of the whole picture. Her function is plainly symbolic, as not only her taciturnity but her tense, scalded face suggests. The reviewer who complains that her attachment to the hero is inadequately explained, or, for that matter, that the wife really is a bit too neurotic to be credible, has lost his bearings.

On the other hand it isn't easy to say what such characters do in fact stand for. The metaphorical aspect of a "dissident" Polish film will be obscure almost by definition; if it were not the film would fall foul of the censor. At one point the "creep in glasses" makes a passionate and by no means contemptible attack on the journalist, and by implication on Wajda himself, denouncing those writers and artists who constantly revert to the criterion "Will it pass?" Such a habit of circumspection can itself circumscribe. The "coffee-house oppositionist" snipes from safe cover yet affects boldness. As in the case of the journalist, his reward may be celebrity and comparative affluence. The Polish title of *Rough Treatment* means "without anaesthetic" — a reference to a scene in which the hero learns about his wife's unfaithfulness while he is having a tooth extracted (at his own insistence) without a pain-killing injection. In a wider sense the anaesthetic which he rejects comprehends various officially-proffered

. . . and the censors

By Gordon Bowker

In Poland, censorship is exercised through the so-called Central Office for Control of Press, Publications and Performances. Its jurisdiction is wide, covering not only the press, books, performances and films, but also small items such as invitation cards, newspaper advertisements and diplomas. At present it is answerable only to the Prime Minister, and has sweeping powers to order, raise, searches and arrests. Despite all this, there has long been a flourishing underground press in Poland, stoutly defying governmental control; and writers and publishers have sometimes been harassed, beaten, or jailed as a result. In other spheres of the arts social criticism has had to be cloaked in metaphor or otherwise half-concealed, as in Wajda's film *Rough Treatment*, in the hope of deceiving the dull censorious eye.

At the moment, however, the activities of the censorship office seem to be temporarily in suspension. Wajda has just completed a new film called *Man of Iron*, about the shipyard workers in Gdansk whose strike last summer helped to precipitate the present political ferment; and Jerzy Sztajnszajn, a Polish-born writer, has been playing to packed houses since he opened in Warsaw in January. Many of the writers and publishers of the uncensored press have emerged from underground and a new free press has blossomed.

This easing of censorship in Poland is the result of the Gdansk Agreement between the government and the newly-formed free unions. Interestingly enough, the unions placed freedom of expression third

euphemisms and evasions — but it also represents the self-congratulatory brand of integrity that he displays in the television interview. Wajda's moral investigations have always been the more telling for his willingness to take account of charges that might be levelled against himself. *Rough Treatment* sustains that honesty.

It must be admitted that such a film is only partially accessible to a western audience. Our response to the allegory is clouded by our remoteness from the pressures that help to define it and by our ignorance of specific issues, institutions, personalities that might be glanced at. Wajda is a Pole signalling to Poles. But the quality of his work can be at least partly perceived by outsiders. *Rough Treatment* moves with brusque energy from one harsh encounter to another. Wajda does without music and almost without backgrounds. The small screen is repeatedly filled by faces in close-up, strained, affectionate, suspicious. A Polish audience would know that here is the insensitivity of a bored official, there the shiftness of a Party time-server. Zbigniew Zapasiewicz, in the leading role, gives a marvelous performance, his mature and intelligent face not merely responsive but seeming positively to evolve through the series of arguments, interviews and parleys that successively erode his existence. What a London audience can confidently recognize in *Rough Treatment* is technique, assurance and intensity.

among their demands, before their demands for improved wages rates. Now, a tripartite Commission on Censorship, consisting of the Ministry of Justice, Solidarity and the newly-formed, Co-ordinating Committee for Creative and Scientific Societies (CCCSS — an alliance of writers, artists and academics) has drafted a new law, the main provisions of which concern the status and powers of the censorship office and the rights of the accused. It also attempts to define precisely what constitutes "a state secret" or "an important political alliance" regarded by the government as particularly sensitive areas.

The playwright Jerzy Sztajnszajn, who is also Vice-President of the Polish Writers' Union, represents the CCCSS on the Commission on Censorship; and, according to him, the main concession wrung from the government is that censored writers will have the right to appeal to the courts and the government will have to justify its actions within a specified time. One major point of disagreement, however, is over the jurisdiction under which the censorship office should fall. The government wishes it to remain answerable to the Prime Minister; the CCCSS and Solidarity want it referred to the Sejm (Parliament). The government also wants to include penalties such as fines or imprisonment for violation of the new law, but the union and the societies are firmly opposed to this.

The draft law is soon to go before the Sejm where a compromise formula will have to be produced. Jerzy Sztajnszajn, however, that neither Solidarity nor the CCCSS are in the mood for compromise.

An exhibition opens next Thursday, May 20, at Bowker and Bowker's, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

Broken images

By Kate Flint

Fragments Against Ruin
Graves Art Gallery, Sheffield.

The title of the Arts Council travelling exhibition, *Fragments Against Ruin*, warns one against expecting much innovation or experimentation from the paintings and sculptures on show. Julian Spalding has chosen an eclectic group of props with which to shore up contemporary culture.

Given £15,000 by the Arts Council to spend over two years on works of art for their loan collection, he claims in the catalogue introduction to have concentrated on relatively unknown artists: a policy which has certainly resulted in some attractive regional finds. Paul Waplington, a Nottingham lace designer, is represented by a crowded aerial perspective of his native town, a tilted mosaic of ochre roofs and chimneys; Peter Mitchell shows a set of small square colour photographs of disappearing Leeds, from demolition workers standing among the tattered wallpaper and rubble of the notorious Quarry Hill flats, to red brick corner shops and a backstreet flag factory.

Two remarks in Spalding's brief introduction reveal the assumptions behind the exhibition. His first prerequisite, "that the works had to be about something", is interpreted in a way that largely excludes the self-referential possibilities of painting. With the exception of Francis Davison's large, dated, torn paper collages and an untitled canvas from Graham Foster constructed around phallic forms, there are no abstract works on show. Spalding prefer the traditional academic stand-bys of anecdote, landscape and portrait. And the second demand which he places on his selection also harks back to nineteenth-century critical standards: one test which he applied to see if a work had been fully realized in visual terms...

was to see if the general effect was enhanced when one looked at the work in detail: a remark which recalls those Victorians who stood a foot away from Monet's haystacks to peer, disapprovingly, at the scrappy canvas patches. No doubt this explains the absence with minutiae manifested by many of Spalding's artists: sometimes posing intriguing results, as in Ray Smith's meticulous coloured pencil type-cage, "V: Venomous V: Venomous" sometimes hard-edged realism of the baked bean and cigarette packet (Bob Robinson's "A Preference for Crisps"); sometimes mere exercises in decorative patience, as seen in the schoolboy-style coloured soldier in "The Battle of Chacabuco", painted by the artist's son, Martin. Certain works redeem this exhibition from the tired techniques employed by many of the artists. In Pollock's painting of alcoholics in the Bowery, hunched against a bar by a spilled liquid, is successfully captured Maggi Clyde's etchings are accomplished and amusing in both execution and concept — for example "A man in a room with a drunk tiger must learn a lot". The illustrative talent shown by these two artists appears, too, in the small panel paintings of Mick Brown, and in the gloomy images of these gates executed by Glen Owen's graphite on photographs. But I must have done without Julian Spalding's accompanying remarks in the catalogue. His qualifications as a ("Painting, like the Liberal Party, survives in the hills") and dusty descriptions of studio interiors, of painters' gardens and terrace houses, all nothing to our understanding of the works on show. Telling us that a wall was tall, gaunt and bearded and the most elementary, unanalytical life" once again recalls Victorian critical dogma in the notion that the work of a painter is somehow related to his work.

Paradoxically, it is the subjectivity of the choice of paintings which has caused their lack of unity. To one who does not share the somewhat conservative preferences suggested by the title, "a heap of broken images" might have seemed a more apposite question to employ.

Fragments Against Ruin is at Sheffield from May 23 to June 21. It goes from there to Southampton, Portsmouth, Bradford, Hull, Durham and Essex, staying about a month in each.

Cocktails and corpses

By T. J. Binyon

House Guest
Savoy Theatre.

When the curtain goes up for the first time on Francis Durbridge's new thriller to reveal that the drawing-room of Robert and Stella Drury's house near Weybridge has a built-in cocktail bar, we know exactly where we are, socially as well as topographically: nothing occurs in the rest of the play to change that first impression. The bar is not just a pretty face. There is a great deal of business with decanters, bottles and glasses; and, of course, with cigarettes, lighter and ashtray. At one point Stella (Susan Hampshire) offers a guest one box but helps herself from another — perhaps a visual equivalent for the good old line: "Turkish this side, gaspers the other."

Visual interest of another kind is provided by Miss Hampshire's gowns, run up in the very same atelier as Lady Diana Spencer's wedding dress. The first, in white jersey, gets a round of applause on its initial appearance (the clapping is surely not just for the wearer), but the monogrammed housecoat in pale coffee-coloured

satins, and the beige *crêpe de chine* creation she wears to foil the villain are equally seductive.

Not all the acting fits easily into the framework of gracious living. Gerald Harper, as Robert Drury, conveys increasing emotional stress by increasingly loud shouts, while Stephen Clayton (Barry Stokes), broadening athletically round the stage, dishing a revolver, obviously thinks that he is in a modern ballet version of Mickey Spillane novel. They do, it is true, have a difficult task. The play perfectly demonstrates — if somewhat in extreme naturalism, films which in real life might provide a mild filler in the saloon bar fall on the stage with the impact of a piece of chalk on a blackboard. The play is a thriller, and the thriller is a play.

It would be unfair to reveal anything of the plot. The author certainly poses an intriguing puzzle in the first act and ends it with a fine curtain line. The solution given in the second act is anti-climatic. So much so, indeed, that one is reduced to wondering whether the Drurys have enough wits for the even increasing number of corpses that are carried upstairs. It is not, apparently, the donee of Weybridge to pile them up in the shed.

Mr. Asa W. H. Hudson biographer I am impelled by Redmond O'Hanlon's (Commentary, May 8) to assume to put the relationship between the BBC television series, *Bread or Blood*, and Hudson's classic book, *A Shepherd's Life*, into proper perspective.

Firstly it must be appreciated that the book is not a work of fiction. Much of it concerns Hudson's own observations, and experiences on the South Downs; but the greater part of it is a biography of James Lawes, the son of a shepherd, who was a pioneer of the "rural subject" in the early days of the 19th century. Hudson's book is a tribute to the memory of James Lawes, who was a pioneer of the "rural subject" in the early days of the 19th century.

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'Bread or Blood'

Sir, — I share with Redmond O'Hanlon ("Better than the books", Commentary, May 8) an admiration for the television series *Bread or Blood* which, as he suggests, bore little relation to Hudson's *A Shepherd's Life*. However, unlike him, I feel no need to beat Hudson about the head on account of this.

He accuses Hudson of being "twee" and preoccupied with the "quaint" and gives examples of him being so. Hudson could be those things, rarely, although the "tweeness" of words like "quaint" and "little" to our ears ought to be qualified by some sense of the past of time and consequent change in the weighting of the words, but his own, when he is read extensively, is as stark, even as chilling, as Mr O'Hanlon could wish.

It says it was a relief to discover the television series — "tough, disciplined, seriously attempting historical accuracy" — possessed a strong plot and well-defined characters. By implication, W. H. Hudson is, and possesses, none of these things. Well, as for toughness, I have mentioned that already as for discipline, Joseph Conrad went to school to him in order to discover how he gained his effects — "he writes as the grass grows"; as for accuracy, naturalists today treat his observations with profound respect and, as for "strong plot" etc. I wonder if Mr O'Hanlon has read *El Ombu*.

On the whole it seems unlikely that a man Ford Madox Ford mentioned in the same breath as Henry James, Joseph Conrad and Stephen Crane, whom Edward Thomas regarded with awe, as his spiritual father, could be the half-dumb suggested by Mr O'Hanlon.

To praise one good thing (the television series), it is surely unnecessary to attempt to destroy another?

P. J. KAVANAGH,
Sparrowthorn, Elkstone, nr Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL53 9PX.

Sir, — What Redmond O'Hanlon means (Commentary, May 8) is that *Bread or Blood* contained more material to further its message than could be found in Hudson. But did Hudson have as much to say? Few lovers of *A Shepherd's Life* value it as a retrospective tract for the times. Those who extend their right to love Hudson's remarkable tour de force novel very little recognize its material other than names. If Peter Smith's real purpose is correctly discerned by O'Hanlon, then Smith would have done better to use Charles Kingsley than Hudson. He could have inserted whole chunks of *Alton Locke* instead.

St Antony's College, Oxford OX2 6JF.

Ihering's Descendants

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8-21 Newbury Street, Whitechurch, Hants RG28 2LQ.

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6 Courtwood Close, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP1 2RX.

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Why should one agree that Conrad's "actual" opinion of Hudson is necessarily contained in "an unpublished review found amongst his papers" rather than elsewhere? Hudson was not one of those that go about crying up the excellence of the world, nor is he "insistently condescending to his rural subjects". Hudson's attitudes are not individual to individual — and he is never condescending: it is hard to think of a book less condescending to a "rural subject" than *A Shepherd's Life*. Nor was its author "uneasy about his social class"; he was born of American parents in Argentina, and this gave him a detachment that makes him effectively classless. He was not much drawn to upper-class rural life, nor was he much interested in class conflict, though *Bread or Blood* chooses to focus on this. He was not unimportant: he had the clearest respect for Caleb Baycomb's reticence and privacy, which must of course be discarded for the ends of BBC television. Hudson is not "forever comparing the downs to the pampas"; nor can one simply declare that his writing about England is diminished by the "gap at the base" of an Argentine childhood. It was that "gap at the base", combined with his powers of observation, that gave his vision of many aspects of English life and nature an unencumbered clarity that can still disturb people like Mr O'Hanlon who are obviously happier with something cooler and more familiar — like *Bread or Blood*. (There are other ways of lapsing into sentimentality besides rhapsodizing about marigolds.)

FRASER STEEL,
33 Moss Lane, Alderley Edge, Cheshire.

Sir, — What a lot of hypocrisy is being displayed by, among others, professional writers as a result of Charles Osborne, literature director of the Arts Council, conceding what everyone (sic) has acknowledged for years, that "mediocrities" have received grants from the Council. It is only necessary to read the works of some of those who have received grants to recognize that it is proper that Ian Rowland Hill, general secretary of the Writers' Guild, in his letter to you (May 8) should resist Mr Osborne's value judgment as, perhaps, it was improper — certainly it was foolhardy — of Mr Osborne to say what he did and when he did. But Mr Osborne has always had a sense of the ridiculous which not all writers have or can afford to have.

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Sir, — What a lot of hypocrisy is being displayed by, among others, professional writers as a result of Charles Osborne, literature director of the Arts Council, conceding what everyone (sic) has acknowledged for years, that "mediocrities" have received grants from the Council. It is only necessary to read the works of some of those who have received grants to recognize that it is proper that Ian Rowland Hill, general secretary of the Writers' Guild, in his letter to you (May 8) should resist Mr Osborne's value judgment as, perhaps, it was improper — certainly it was foolhardy — of Mr Osborne to say what he did and when he did. But Mr Osborne has always had a sense of the ridiculous which not all writers have or can afford to have.

MALCOLM DEAS,
St Antony's College, Oxford OX2 6JF.

Ihering's Descendants

GEOFFREY ROBINSON,
8-21 Newbury Street, Whitechurch, Hants RG28 2LQ.

Sir, — Asa W. H. Hudson biographer I am impelled by Redmond O'Hanlon's (Commentary, May 8) to assume to put the relationship between the BBC television series, *Bread or Blood*, and Hudson's classic book, *A Shepherd's Life*, into proper perspective.

Firstly it must be appreciated that the book is not a work of fiction. Much of it concerns Hudson's own observations, and experiences on the South Downs; but the greater part of it is a biography of James Lawes, the son of a shepherd, who was a pioneer of the "rural subject" in the early days of the 19th century. Hudson's book is a tribute to the memory of James Lawes, who was a pioneer of the "rural subject" in the early days of the 19th century.

doesn't need the money", which was completely to miss the point.

Even if Iain Crichton Smith and George Mackay Brown — let alone William Golding, Muriel Spark or Graham Greene — could be persuaded to apply for grants subject to their accepting that the quality of their work was what was at issue, who should have sponsored them — members of the Writers' Guild (of which I am in many ways proud to be a member) or the Society of Authors, non-mediocrities all?

Mr Rowland Hill writes that Mr Osborne's remarks are "a serious affront not only to those writers but also to the members of the Literature Panels who made the original decisions". What was a serious affront to the members of the literature panels was that, because of the system, second and third-rate writers tended to be the ones sponsored for handouts. What Charles Osborne, together with successive chairpersons and members of the literature panel, should be criticized for is not doing something about the procedure years ago.

GILES GORDON,
9 St Ann's Gardens, London NWS 4ER.

Sir, — Your reviewer, P.R. Fawcett, evidently has not read my biography of Pierre Louÿs very carefully (April 10). I did not "miss" the letters from Louÿs to Debussy, published in the *Revue de Musicologie*. They are cited in the bibliography under the name of the editor, Edward Lockspeiser. Moreover, an important passage from one of them is quoted on page 42, with the relevant reference being given in the notes. Contrary to Mr Fawcett's statement, my book also contains various inédicts.

More importantly, Mr Fawcett's remarks regretting the absence of any study of Louÿs's works betray his lack of familiarity with critical writings on the subject. Otherwise he would know Giorgio Mirandola's important study of the works in his *Pierre Louÿs* (Milan, 1976), as well as the interesting *Pierre Louÿs: a life in decadence* by Mariella di Majo (Rome, 1979).

H.P. CLIVE,
Carleton University, Ottawa K1S 5B6.

To the editor is continued overleaf

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to the editor

Scots Law

Sir, — I am sorry not to have been able to reply before this to the letter from Alexander Murdoch and Hector L. Macquenn (May 1) who complained about a remark I made in reviewing (March 6) *Lawyers in Early Modern Europe and America* (ed. W. Prest). One of the essays in that volume, I suggested, indicates that "before the sixteenth century Scots law simply did not exist". I also added that it would be injudicious at that time to consider the implications of this bombshell, but it seems that I bought myself very little time by such cowardly caution. Mr Murdoch, author of the essay in question, wishes to dissociate himself from my remark on the grounds that "the creation of the common law of Scotland was an achievement... of the Middle Ages". I naturally accept his expert opinion but would respectfully suggest that it is one hardly to be inferred from his demonstration that the royal Court of Sessions, instituted in the 1530s, was needed to get the landed classes "to forsake private warfare for litigation as a means of resolving their disputes", especially since this point is linked to statements according to which "the rest of society received its law from the great landed families through the feudal web of local hereditary jurisdictions which persisted in Scotland until 1747" and "in the highlands the word of the chief was law... with little reference to the law... lawyers". Mr Murdoch rightly emphasizes the notable separateness of Scotland: do I understand that this separateness extends to the meaning to be given to the term "common law"?

G. R. ELTON,
Clare College, Cambridge CB2 1TL.

'Selected Poems' of Howard Sergeant

Sir, — I am obliged to Stewart Brown (Letters, May 8) for pointing out that practically all the poems included in my *Selected Poems* were taken from volumes published in 1946 and 1954, though this important piece of information was omitted in the review of the book by Tom Ditch (April 3). It may well have been wiser to include recent work to provide some kind of balance; but it was on the strength of the selection as it stands that I was given the Henry Shaw Award. It was felt that the later poems should be published in a separate volume.

Since a totally incorrect impression

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may have been given by the review, it ought in all fairness to be made clear to your readers that Mr Ditch's observations should be confined to poems originally published thirty years ago, and not extended to my current output which, written in contemporary style and idiom, may prove more in keeping with his taste.

HOWARD SERGEANT.

72 Burwood Road, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey KT12 4AL.

Short Stories

Sir, — Valentine Cunningham's review of Joyce Carol Oates's new collection of short stories, *A Sentimental Education* (March 20), began in this way: "Short stories are highly determined forms of fiction. They are always about to end, and shortly. So they've come to specialize in the short sharp shock, the twist in the tale, the punchline. They attract, in short, nastily surprising, inevitably violent ends."

Reading those dogmatic sentences one felt the nasty shock Mr Cunningham alludes to passing violently through the surprised reader and on into such short stories as "The Man Who Would Be King" (Kipling), "The Beast in the Jungle" (James), "Araby" (Joyce), "Prelude" (Mansfield), "The Secret Sharer" (Conrad), "The Artificial Nigger" (O'Connor), "Gimpel the Fool" (Singer), "That Evening Sun" (Faulkner), "The Darling" (Chekhov), "Soldier's Home" (Hemingway), "Friends" (Paley), "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" (Thurber), and even the one "we all came out from under" — Gogol's "The Overcoat".

One could go on for some time citing examples of masterly short stories that do not answer to Mr Cunningham's description. The twist he administers to the tale (which Mr Cunningham jocularly spells "tale" for, he is an Oxford wit) limits, trivializes and misrepresents the possibilities of the form while holding up its vices and pitfalls as if they were inescapable, and even in some way admirable. His description may very well fit the sort of stories Joyce Carol Oates has written; I haven't read them and cannot say. But I do hear Grace Paley whispering to Henry James: "Wife's not talking about us, thank goodness. But who the hell is he talking about?"

LORNA TRACY
Apt No 2, 1416 S Second Street,
Louisville, Kentucky 40208.

La Sorcellerie

Sir, — I am the translator of Jeanne Favret-Saada's book, *Deadly Words*, reviewed by Lucy Mair (May 1). She argues that I should have translated the French *sortellerie* by "sorcery" rather than "witchcraft", and adds: "Then it would have been unnecessary to invent the ungainly word 'unwitcher', to translate the French 'unwitcher'." I did not invent the word "unwitcher" as can be ascertained by a look at the OED. Lucy Mair believes that "there is no French word for witchcraft as opposed to sorcery". It would be truer to say that there is no French word for sorcery as opposed to witchcraft. *Sorcellerie* and sorcery are false friends. *Sorcellerie* and witchcraft have been used to translate each other for centuries (including in the French translation of Evans-Pritchard's book on Zande witchcraft). Incidentally, *Deadly Words* was not translated by "Catherine Allen" but by

CATHERINE CULLEN.

33 rue Crûlebarbe, Paris.

Yankees

Sir, — On the etymology of "Yankee", your reviewer D. J. Enright (April 10) cites three possible etymologies for the word Yankee, two of them Dutch origin. Allow me the pedantry of pointing out two inaccuracies.

First, the Dutch words Jan Kees cannot be rendered into English as John Cheese. Kees is the diminutive of Cornelius. Cheese is "Kaas" in Dutch, close, but certainly not to be confused with "Kees".

Second, the diminutive of Jan is Jantje, not Janke. Thus Jan Kees and Jantje are simply names (quite common ones) which may have been used by the early Dutch settlers to designate

their British counterparts. In present Dutch usage a "Jantje" is a sailor of the Royal Dutch Navy. It is, moreover, found in a number of widely used sayings, e.g. "een Jantje van Leiden": somebody who cuts corners.

Finally, let me point out that the mistake should not be attributed to your reviewer, but rather to the sources he cites.

R. E. WESSELS.

Van Oostelaan 32, Krimpen a/d Yssel, The Netherlands.

Poets Against the Bomb

Sir, — Carol Rumens (Commentary, May 1) suggests that the reading by "Poets Against the Bomb" in Chelsea Town Hall "seemed to inherit something of the spirit of that historic happening at the Albert Hall in 1965", and that "with fourteen performers... it certainly scored over its predecessor as to length". In fact the first Albert Hall session, with eighteen poets, ran virtually non-stop for four and a half hours — a good forty-five minutes longer than the CND gig. More to the point, only a few hundred attended the latter, whereas "its predecessor" is the only poet-meet I know of ever to have attracted an audience of anything like 7,000 in Britain.

Your reporter registers "a confused, slightly dated, but not unexciting impression" of the current "poetry world" from last month's reading. She might have derived an equally exciting, and rather less dated one from the "Poetry Olympics" launch at Westminster Abbey last September, in that several younger poets held forth, alongside their elders, in diverse inventive bardic styles — John Cooper Clarke,

Linton Kwesi Johnson, the exiled Russian Edward Limonov, Janine Pommy Vega from New York.

It makes no sense to lay any restrictive sort of claims to spiritual lineage, but the inception of the Poetry Olympics idea (as witness my eulogy about it in *New Departures*) did draw most deliberately on the energies which came to such a spectacular confluence under Albert dome sixteen years ago. And looking stuck in a (time-war), not because of their militant internationalism but, particularly, in the effort to get the organization of poetic communications back into the hands of the poets.

MICHAEL HOROVITZ.

Editor, *New Departures*, 145 Stroud, Glos GL6 7BU.

'The Burning Pestle'

Sir, — With regard to Stash Wells's review of the RSC *Knight's Burning Pestle* (Commentary, May 1), I must point out that in his Beaumont's text and Bogdanov's production Ralph is not a miser, and not his son as is twice stated. This mistake seems also to cut deep on the reviewer's understanding of "Beaumont's structures" which the RSC production is alleged to make mine.

GRAHAM LAW.

57 Stanley Road, Brighton, East Sussex.

Christopher Booker's *The Coward* — *A Moscow Journal*, reviewed in *TLS* of April 10, is also published by Faber as a paperback (25.0 571 11763 5).

Among this week's contributors

GERALD ABRAHAM's *The Concise Oxford History of Music* was published last year.

SHERWIN BAILEY was, until recently, a residential canon of Wells Cathedral.

JOHN BARRELL's most recent book is *The Dark Side of the Landscape: the Rural Poor in English Painting 1730-1840*, 1980.

DAVID BINDMAN's *Hogarth* was published earlier this year.

ALAN BROWNJOHN's most recent collection of poems is *A Night in the Gazebo*, 1980.

IAN BROWNIE is Chichele Professor of Public International Law at the University of Oxford. He is the editor of *Basic Documents on Human Rights* which was published earlier this year.

HUMPHREY CARPENTER's biography of W. H. Auden will be published next month.

FRANK COFFIN is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Essex.

PATRICIA CRAIG's critical study, *The Lady Invention: Women Detectives and Spies in Fiction*, a collaboration with Mary Cadogan, was published earlier this year.

DON CURRY's *Taking Leave of God* was published in 1980.

P. N. FURMAN's books include *E. M. Forster: A Life 1879-1970*. He is presently at work on a new book, *The Concept of Social Class*.

ROY HARRIS is Professor of General Linguistics at the University of Oxford. His *The Language Myth* will be published by Duckworth this summer.

BRIAN HARRISON is Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

PETER HIBBLETHWAITE's most recent book is *The New Inquisition: Schillebeeckx and Küng*, 1980.

ERIC HOMBERGER's books include *The Art of the Real: Poetry in England since 1939*, 1977.

JAMES HOWARD-JOHNSTON is a lecturer in Byzantine Studies at the University of Oxford.

SIR DAVID HUNT's books include *A Don at War*, 1966, and *On the Spot*, 1975.

MICHAEL IRWIN is Senior Lecturer in English at the University of Kent at Canterbury.

PETER KEAR's critical study, *H. G. Wells and the Culturalizing Ape*, will be published shortly.

D. M. KNIGHT's books include *Natural Science Books in English 1600-1900*, 1972.

OWEN LATTIMORE is Professor Emeritus of Chinese Studies at the University of Leeds.

HERMONIE LEE is the author of *The Novels of Virginia Woolf*, 1977.

PETER MARSHALL is Professor of American History at the University of Manchester.

BRIAN MONTGOMERY is the author of *A Field-Marshal in the Family*, 1973.

HUGH NOYES is the Parliamentary Correspondent of *The Times*.

TOM PEARLIE's most recent book is *A Humument: A Treatise of a Victorian Novel*, 1980.

ANTHONY QUINCY's recent books include *Thoughts and Thinkers* and *Francis Bacon*, both 1980.

W. D. REDFERN's books include *The Private World of Jean Genet*, 1967.

Linton Kwesi Johnson, the exiled Russian Edward Limonov, Janine Pommy Vega from New York.

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57 Stanley Road, Brighton, East Sussex.

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REFERENCE BOOKS

W. A. SEYMOUR (Editor):
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Anyone who can resist the fascination of a map must be cold and unimaginative indeed, for it is a symbol of the ingenuity and effort man deploys in gaining control over his environment. But it also offers pleasures of a more ephemeral kind. With Britain's Ordnance Survey maps, there is not only harmony of colour and elegance of design to delight the eye (how is it actually possible to get such richness of detail so neatly and unconfusedly on a plane?); there is also a wealth of archaeological detail to tempt the historian; the hint of long-lost buildings, stations and junctions to charm the railway enthusiast; the lure of scheduled parks and forgotten arbours to entice the romantic; the tangle of crag rivers, obscure footpaths and impossible cliffs to carry off the adventurous — not to mention the minutiae and cyclist's multitudinous points of Birmingham by way of Beely Head.

There seems no end to the pleasures offered by what is surely one of the greatest among our national achievements. A market-survey of 1870 revealed, plausibly enough, that interest in maps is noticeably greater among men than among women, and significantly greater in south than north. But credibility is strained, for the reviewer at least, by the revelation that interest in maps peaks at about the age of forty-four, for how could the pleasure possibly have been postponed for so long?

The history of Ordnance Survey mapping is a tale of minor heroism and perseverance well worth the telling. Its origins lie in the late eighteenth century's conjuncture of national scientific need, military commitment (in Scotland), and burgeoning private initiative in the production of county maps.

The obstacles to be overcome were formidable. Here, as with the early days, there was hostility to the very idea. Simon Woodcock, for example, surveying the terrain in North Devon during 1804, faced "insults and interruptions". Surveyors had to be trained; trig-points and benchmarks established (6,500 pillar markers had been set up throughout the country by 1835); long distances travelled, at times without the aid of the railways; and all the hazards of the British weather braved in the remotest of spots.

Aerial photography and automated mapping have not entirely eliminated such dangers: in the primary triangulation of 1949, one observer in Scotland dislocated his shoulder while heading off an attack by Arctic skuas whose nesting he had inadvertently disturbed. It is hardly surprising to find that as late as 1972 participation in field-work was restricted to the male sex. Nor does it require much imagination to appreciate the difficulties facing the Ordnance Survey's headquarters in Southampton, which did not enjoy electric lighting till 1880, and was not linked up to the national telephone system till 1914.

Then there were all the technical obstacles to be reached. Early Victorian argument abounded, for instance, on how best to depict land and what scales were to be adopted. Machines took their toll: the Survey's first map, the 1804 one, the argument over scale perhaps fully on its own terms with the advent of lithography, like so many other national institutions, the Survey has been eventually overcome, and to bring out the detailed sequence of events five recurring obstacles to the success of the Survey whose unpredictable interaction makes up a sixth.

The first of these is simply that the terrain being investigated is perpetually in flux owing to industry's continually changing requirements of the landscape. Massive earthworks are thrown up by the canals, docks and

the orthography of the Glamorgan-shire Plate of the Ordnance Map—Penlyne Castle, Penlyn Castle, and Penlline Castle near Cowbridge: can you obtain correct information if any one of these is right? The Survey did much to stabilize and even fossilize the spelling of local place-names.

Not the least among the Survey's difficulties was the problem of accommodation. In 1841 a fire in the Tower of London caused the Map Office to move down to Southampton, and then in 1940 Hitler's bombs destroyed much of the Survey's hard-won records before they had been fully duplicated. Not till the late 1960s did it get its first purpose-built accommodation.

To overcome these and other difficulties, formidable qualities were required. These were not lacking in a man like Colby, who dedicated his life to the Survey from 1801 till his retirement in 1846; for twenty-six of those years he was superintendent. He seems to have been one of those legendary nineteenth-century British figures whose energy caused him almost literally to run his colleagues off their feet.

"There was about him an air of will and determination," wrote a colleague, "which secured for him the obedience and respect of his subordinates." All who served under him in his early years, wrote another colleague, "will remember to have, on some occasion, met him running rather than walking (for such was his custom) along the street on his return from the Ordnance Office to the Tower, and to have been greeted by the hearty invitation: 'Come back, my boy, and take a beef-steak with me... or 'Come to the lecture at the London Institution, and let us take a chop by the way'". So dedicated was Colby to the Survey that when Parliament failed to vote sufficient money for it he forewent his salary for at least five years to help fill the gap, and was never reimbursed.

By the end of his career, the one-inch survey had got up to the Hull-Preston line, Ireland had been surveyed and published at six inches to the mile, and the six-inch survey of Scotland was under way. The Ordnance Survey's team was skilled enough by the 1860s to be required for purposes well beyond the mapping of the United Kingdom; in 1864-65, for instance, its mapping of Jerusalem helped to improve the pilgrims' water-supply and sanitation; and in 1868-69 its mapping of Sinal helped to resolve problems of biblical scholarship. By 1875 the Survey's methods were so much in request overseas that it published an account of them in that year.

A combination of drive from the top and of military discipline throughout (for the Ordnance Survey has always had a strong military component) was essential to ultimate success, though many difficulties in staff management resulted from its mixed civil/military recruitment. Also important was the sheer challenge offered by the mapmaker's task; this helped to develop an *esprit de corps* which can be glimpsed in operation as early as 1819, at the "farwell feast" which concluded the trigonometrical survey's working session; an "enormous plum-pudding" was in evidence, followed by a party from which the officers "withdrew" after drinking "Success to the Trig".

But this is not the place to narrate the Survey's history, which is amply told in the volume under review. Suffice it here to emphasize the magnitude of the difficulties that were eventually overcome, and to bring out from the detailed sequence of events five recurring obstacles to the success of the Survey whose unpredictable interaction makes up a sixth.

The first of these is simply that the terrain being investigated is perpetually in flux owing to industry's continually changing requirements of the landscape. Massive earthworks are thrown up by the canals, docks and

Symbolizing the scenery

By Brian Harrison

seaports of the early industrial period, by the railways of the 1840s, by the roadbuilding of the 1930s, by the motorways of the 1960s. Boundaries and patterns of settlement are transformed by shifts in the sources of industrial energy, by changes in farming methods and by the extensive housebuilding that has gone on throughout the twentieth century. Between the wars it was at last recognized that up-dating the Survey needed to be continuous rather than periodic.

But the problems arising from this first difficulty are compounded by the second: the continuously changing, even vacillating, but ultimately mounting demands made by politicians and administrators. Sanitary and franchise reform, the commutation, legislation on enclosures, the demands of the census and of town and country planning, the land registration demanded by the land reformer and the conservation demanded by the anti-urbanists — these bring increasing and diverse pressures to bear on the mapmaker.

Still more disruptive are the requirements of war, whose demands the authorities always regarded as paramount within the Survey's brief. The army's thirst for personnel at first drains off staff, only to uncover a thirst for military maps that is far more urgent than in peacetime. During the First World War, remarkable feats were performed by the Survey in providing the detailed overseas maps required by trench warfare. During the Second World War — despite all the destruction, decentralization and disruption — the total annual number of cylinder revolutions in map printing rose twenty-four-fold.

Commenting on the Survey in 1886, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* saw its military element as "at once the framework, the backbone, the substratum on which the stability of the whole depends". Yet here is a military operation whose general social utility in peacetime is patent. The Survey therefore seems something of an anomaly to those Liberal and Labour politicians whose outlook on the world assumes an inevitable conflict between the demands of war and the needs of education. Indeed, one of twentieth-century Britain's most attractive educational success-stories has surely been the Survey's series of historical maps, pioneered from the 1920s by the splendidly individualistic O. G. S. Crawford; the latest of them, *Britain before the Norman Conquest*, appeared in 1974.

But the Survey is also in some ways difficult for the Right to assimilate as well, and here lies the third of its major difficulties: the ambiguity of its relationship with the state. For the Survey's continuous growth offers a perennial affront to the more doctrinaire twentieth-century enthusiasts for private enterprise. There have been recurrent problems throughout its history about the pricing of maps produced partly to meet government's need, and about the marketing and copyright of maps which the taxpayer has helped to finance and which the private market and seller of maps regards as a source of simultaneous peril and profit.

One of the Survey's major difficulties has been the huge made-by-short-sighted government's economic policy which merely build up a backlog of survey work requiring subsequent remedy. The full force of the Godden Axe was felt in the 1920s, yet already by the 1930s the requirements of government itself were compelling a large recruitment of staff to rectify the defects thus created.

Nor has this aspect of the story yet ended; for the Survey surely offers a prime example of that steadily mounting, "unproductive" government activity that is at present, under attack. It is a Quango ripe for assassination in the present government's silly campaign against institutions which — to many minds at least — have long provided admirable opportunities for extending participation in public

affairs, and for economizing on government expenditure by enlisting the voluntary labour of the public-spirited. From its earliest days, the Survey was able to get its work monitored by local volunteers, whether they were local dyersmen advising on place-names or antiquarian societies locating a tumulus. When compiling his historical maps, Crawford between the wars drew upon a whole network of informal contacts so as to refine the accuracy and completeness of his product.

The fourth among the Survey's continuing difficulties will now be obvious: the near-impossibility, at least before the age of the computer, of harmonizing the different aspects of its work so as to secure maximum productivity and speed of production. If government requirements, retail demand and speed of survey-work are difficult to predict, production schedules in the Survey's several departments all too easily get out of phase.

Nor is the situation always helped by the fifth perennial difficulty: the continuous need to respond to technological change. By the 1850s the Survey was already experimenting with photographic reproduction, and during the twentieth century it has battled to overcome the problems presented by aerial photography. Improved printing techniques, automated survey and the advent of a computer (in 1968) further complicated the picture, so that it remains a matter for surprise that the maps get published at all, let alone that they attain such a high standard.

But it is time to turn to the book that has given rise to these reflections, and it is praise indeed to say that the labour involved in compiling it is

reminiscent of the work that the Survey has itself entailed during the past two centuries. Like the enterprise it describes, the book is one of those academic projects that proceed quietly on their way over a long period, requiring great tact and dedication from their navigators, and reaping unending gratitude from subsequent scholars once they have got into port.

Launched in 1963, this first comprehensive study of the Survey's history ran into a host of difficulties. The first editor was killed in a motor accident in 1970, and the second had to withdraw in 1974, by which time uneven progress had been made on the various chapters. 1976 saw a final draft complete, but radical structural alterations then seemed necessary, and two further years were absorbed in re-arranging the material; by which time the project had lost all chance of government funding for its publication. So we must be pleased that the book has appeared at all, and congratulate both the contributors, on the wealth of valuable information it has collected, and the publishers on its handsome presentation.

The contributors are not historians, but geographers, librarians and map-makers. The restructuring of 1976-78 has dispersed their contributions throughout the book's thirty-five chapters, and authorship of any one section is not readily identifiable; this is therefore a collaborative work in the best sense. Thoroughly documented, with twenty-seven plates (some of them in colour) and a good index, it draws extensively on official administrative records and parliamentary papers, and manages to bridge over the gap created in the

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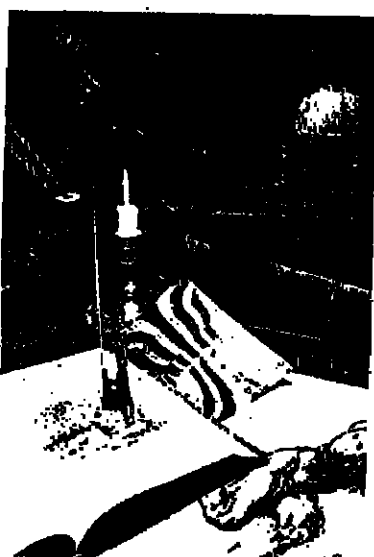
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Modern means worse

Hermione Lee

A. C. WARD (Editor):

Longman Companion to Twentieth-
Century Literature
Third Edition

598pp. Longman. £12.50.
0 582 35307 6

It's a surprise to find "Napoleon Bonaparte" as an entry in a Companion to Twentieth-Century Literature, but here he is, in his less familiar role as "Detective in novels by Arthur Upfield". The entry is characteristic of the old-fashioned eccentricities of this reference book, which has been "revised" by Maurice Huxley but which has retained plenty of A.C. Ward's gentlemanly, antiquated preferences and prejudices.

The entries consist of names (not only of authors but also of critics, artists, philosophers, etc.), titles, plot summaries, names of characters, and general entries dealing with terms (like Naturalism), institutions (like PEN) and genres. Throughout, there is an acknowledged emphasis on English literature, but gestures are made towards Commonwealth, African, Indian, European and American writers. If the volume were called "Companion to Twentieth Century English Literature" this might be acceptable, but, given the wider claims of the title, its balance is very unequal. Quite apart from the absurdity of giving less space to Kafka, Mann, or Strindberg than to Eric Linklater, C. S. Forester or Sir

Neville Cardus, there are omissions of many important European figures - Arendt, Adorno, Bachelard, Barthes, Benjamin, Cassirer, Hofmannsthal, Huysmans, Karl Kraus, Lukács, Obaldia - and of Americans such as John Ashbery, Randall Jarrell, Anaïs Nin and Flannery O'Connor. Within its own parochial limits there are gaps (Kenneth Allott, George Steiner), mistakes ("Kimbrell" O'Hara, Willa Cather's "The Last Lady") and peculiar weightings: Henry Green and Stevie Smith get shorter entries than, say, Sir Newman Flower, director of Cassell's and author of books on Handel and Schubert. *The Archers* and *The Brains Trust* are in, but not *The Goon Show* or *Coronation Street*. *The Wind in the Willows*, *Peter Pan* and *Watership Down* (described as a "rabbit epic") have their own entries; why not, then, *The Lord of the Rings*, or *Winnie the Pooh*? The only apparent logic of selection seems to be a preference for the traditional over the experimental or difficult, for *Lark Rise or The Good Companions* or Walter de la Mare's poetry over "Ash Wednesday" ("It is explicable only in its own mystic language") or *Ulysses* ("The reader requires a commentary to understand the major part of the novel").

The accounts of individual writers and their works are bland, relying heavily on phrases like "it has been critically acknowledged as one of the greatest importance", and sometimes questionable. Roethke "found no public outside America". Iris Murdoch's later novels "displayed some loss of coherence, and over-preoccupation with symbolism and sexual vagaries".

Dorothy Richardson's Miriam Henderson "is so enduringly dull that the merits of the author's experimental techniques are obscured". Virginia Woolf's characters "are deficient in flesh and blood and bone and insufficiently differentiated from one another". Beckett's self-liberation "from virtually all theatrical conventions" sprang from "his understanding that nothing had any real existence". These remarks are typical of a breathtaking insensitivity to and ignorance about modernist and post-modernist writing.

Such an attitude to twentieth-century literature has a political basis. The entries on "avant-garde", "beat", "gay liberation", "hippies", and "structuralism" ("phenomenology" and "post-modernism" are not listed) sound like old *Times* leaders: "Any widening of the gap between writers and readers should be deplored and unrepentantly experimental writers may in the end only serve to make such gaps more permanent". The book's reluctance to come to terms with the movements in thought and literature which it is supposed to be covering (and which are much more competently dealt with in the *Pontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*) is accompanied by a comical prissiness about sexual matters. Arnold Bennett's marriage was "an inharmonious union"; Peter Pears was Benjamin Britten's "lifelong colleague"; J. M. Cain, author of *The Postman*, his "sexual deviance"; noted for his "avoidance of sexual intercourse" in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*; "intercourse is described in colloquial terms employing words tabu in print until the result of the Chatterley case

ushered them into the literary world as a pair with their age-old literary usage". Katherine Mansfield is "grossly", said to have resorted to "Galsworthy's treatment" "in search of a miracle to restore her husband's love... She had already existing intellectual and emotional faculties, would make her again a happily balanced and delicate wife."

In practical terms, it's hard to see the usefulness of many of the entries. General terms with no relevance to the century's literature are included (euphuism, flibbertigibbet, metaphorical poetry, negative capability, the Pre-Raphaelites) and named characters from minor or obscure works are solemnly listed: *Alas, Alas* Blow from John Drinkwater's *Abraham Lincoln*, Lieutenant Duvall from Shaw's *Fanny's First Play*, Long plot summaries are given of John Massfield's *The Daffodil Field*, a Meade Falkner's *The Newby Cane*, the summaries of better-known works, there are gaps: Professor Odohe is missed out of *A Passage to India*, Don Kilman from *Mrs Dalloway*, Dr Monygham from *Nostramo*.

I suppose the book has a certain idiosyncratic English charm, and it must be the only reference work to existence which has Karl Marx and Mary Poppins. But to think of it as useful seriously by schoolchildren and students (let alone, as the preface so quaintly puts it, "as a guide to how reading") makes my blood run cold.

Sitting targets

By Hugh Noyes

MICHAEL STENTON and STEPHEN LEES (Editors):

Who's Who of British Members of Parliament
Volume IV, 1945-1979
424pp. Brighton Harvester £40.
0 85227 01087 5

As a concise but not very exciting biographical record of politicians since the end of the Second World War, the latest volume of the *Who's Who of British Members of Parliament* (Volume IV, 1945-1979) will no doubt serve a useful purpose as a handy reference book. But this volume, edited by Michael Stenton of Peterhouse, Cambridge and Stephen Lees of the University of Cambridge Library, is, as the authors admit, far from complete. Its compilation from (alphabetically) Leopold Abes to Konrad Zilliox has clearly involved much hard slogging and research. It is based on the annual volumes of *Who's Who of British Members of Parliament* backed up by material from numerous other sources, including obituaries, newspaper cuttings, the *Times* *Guides to the House of Commons* and to the *European Parliament*, Burke's and DeBrett's *Peerages* and a host of other reference works.

Considering all this research, it is perhaps disappointing that the authors have not come up with biographies that are somewhat more adventurous. With few exceptions the records of past and present MPs give the reader a fairly humdrum and pedestrian account of wives and children, births, deaths and marriages, schools, universities, main political held in politics as well as certain outside interests and careers.

Only in the more obvious cases is there any attempt to go beyond the bare bones of the subject under inspection. We are told, for example, that John Sturges was reported missing in Miami and reappeared in Australia, that he was convicted on eighteen charges of fraud, conspiracy and theft. There is a brief reference to John Profumo's relationship with Christine Keeler and to the fact that Peter Baker (not to be confused with Peter Baker, the present MP for Blackpool South) was expelled from the House after conviction for forgery.

and sentenced to seven years imprisonment. We also learn that Commander Courtney was the victim of a plot by the Russian intelligence service. But these tidbits are, unfortunately, the exception rather than the rule, and one cannot feel feeling that, with a little extra delving, the authors might have come up with a few more nuggets.

There is little in most of the biographies to give any flavour of the personalities concerned. There is no indication of the extensive farming interests of Mr James Prior or of the diabolical eccentricities of some of the great parliamentary characters such as Dame Irene Ward, A.P. Herbert, Lieut-Col Sir Walter Bromley-Davenport or Ernest Marples. The twelve lines devoted to Bernard Devlin tell almost nothing about her while even the giants of the parliamentary scene, such as Iain Macleod or Aneurin Bevan, could easily be missed. It is a pity that the opportunity has been taken to bring out some of the flavour of individual politicians by including more of the highlights, however minor, of their political careers. For instance, the attempt by Mr

Emrys Hughes to nationalize *The Times*. Too many of the subjects are allowed to get away with giving their addresses merely as the House of Commons, while surely there is something more to Robert Woolf who sat for the Blaydon division of Durham from 1956-1979 than the seven lines allotted to him.

One useful departure from the usual reference statistics and something that could well have been used more extensively by the authors, is the decision to not vote against the majority decision of his party on the BEC division of October 28, 1971. So we are told, for instance, that Neil Martin (Conservative) voted against entry, while Harold Lever (Labour) voted for entry. This could well have been done on many more issues, particularly on matters of individual conscience, such as abortion or the death penalty.

On a more minor point, the indexing for a volume of this nature is far from adequate. The only index is for the names of MPs and even here the page number of the entry is not given. The authors mention that they have been

struck by the large number of names who have become MPs and the success of certain trade unions in obtaining parliamentary representation unmatched by equal success in ministerial arena. However, what some sort of an index to throw some light on this fascinating information would be beyond the determination of most readers to get at the full figures.

The authors also state in the preface that the "commercial and interest group connections" are not included in this volume because these are "not stated in contemporary reference literature". They make no reference to the register of MPs' interests which has existed now for several years within the House of Commons and from which it would be possible to glean many of these facts.

However this will be a work of considerable usefulness. Taken together with earlier volumes, it will provide biographies of every member of parliament to have sat in the House of Commons between 1832 and 1979 and for that reason alone will be an important addition to any reference library.

Track record

By Sherwin Bailey

EDGAR JONES:

The Penguin Guide to the Railways of Britain
397pp. Allen Lane. £9.95 (paperback, £2.95).
0 7139 1137 9

Edgar Jones explains, in his introduction, that this guide is "principally designed to serve the traveller using British Rail and accordingly is concerned with the present railway network". The greater part of his book, therefore, deals with the railways of London, the main routes out of the capital, and with such cross-country and branch lines as remain, and have not lost their importance. The guide is based on the regions of BR, points of scale and historic interest are noted, and the architectural features of the

chief stations are described. The reader is also told where to find preserved steam railways and railway museums. The accompanying maps are clear, and generally accurate.

The guide proper is prefaced by an account of the evolution and technical development of the British railway system. Here the predominant emphasis is upon the locomotive. There is a brief but clear explanation of the working of a steam engine, and a diagram of a typical 4-6-2 locomotive which could with advantage have been placed opposite the text instead of on the following page. There are also serious omissions from this section. In dealing with track no mention is made of track layout design, and signalling is treated rather superficially - nothing is said about the principles of signal location or the rationale and operation of the absolute block system. N. M. Lowe's *Coastlines and Signal Cabin*, which gives by far the best account of the signalling system and the signalman's craft, does not appear in the "Guide to Further Reading" Space

ought also to have been found for a brief reference to "Control", and to the work of the Railway Clearing House.

I noticed several slips, among them Bristol Temple Meads station is down not up, the line from Bath (page 95) on the map of the Birmingham area (page 180) the MR lines east of the city appear to be inaccurate, drawing on page 203 is of Exeter, not Blyth, and on page 283 "diamond crossing" should read "diamond crossing".

The regular or occasional traveller, and the overseas visitor will find this guide an informative and interesting companion on his journeys by rail, and if he wants to know more about the lines he travels in the bibliography at the end of the book is a useful addition. Among the appendices is a table of railway fares, which gives the traveller an impression of the colour scene he might have witnessed from 1900 at a great junction like York or Carlisle.

Scores by the score

By Gerald Abraham

The Catalogue of Printed Music in the
British Library to 1980

Volume 1, A-Anderson. 404pp.
Edited by Laureen Baillie

The Catalogue to be published in 62
volumes, £5,518 the set.

K. G. Saur.
ISBN for set 0 85157 900 0

The collection of printed music in the British Library, until 1973 the music section of the Department of Printed Books in the British Museum, contains some 970,000 items and may well have reached the million mark by the time the sixty-second volume of the present Catalogue appears in 1986. (The publishers promise one volume per month.) But that will cover only the holdings to 1980; Achilles, and the tortoise still plod on. However impressive the figure, it is not a surprising one, seeing that the nucleus dates from the 1760s. In a note in the prospectus Dr Hyatt King, Superintendent of the British Museum Music Room from 1944 to 1973 and then Music Librarian of the British Library until 1976, explains that

the basis of an ever-expanding collection came from music which was published in Great Britain, and was received at first through Stationers' Hall, then by deposit under various Copyright Acts from 1814 onwards. The International Copyright Act of 1852, which was effective until 1886, secured a large quantity of European music, mainly from France and Germany. Growth also came from large purchases of rare early music and of works by all the leading composers of each generation in Europe and America.

Yet to find one's way about one of the world's greatest libraries of printed music has hitherto been almost impossible without help - always readily given - by members of the staff. Although accession lists were printed for internal use from 1884 onward, the first generally available *Catalogue of Printed Music published between 1497 and 1800 now in the British Museum* was not published till 1912. Its coverage was stupendous though two supplements followed and special catalogues were issued for the Royal Music Library when George V deposited it on loan in 1929 - our present Queen converted the loan to a gift - and for the Paul Hirsch Collection in 1951. Only now has it become possible to offer international scholars a key to the entire library.

Facts of the fighting

By Philip Warner

ROBERT GORALSKI:

World War II Almanac 1931-1945
486pp. Unnumbered black and white illustrations. Hamish Hamilton. £9.95.
0 241 10573 0

MARCEL DAUDOT, HENRI BERNARD, GERBRIK BRUGMANS, MICHAEL R. D. FOOT, HANS-ADOLF JACOBSEN (Eds):

The Historical Encyclopedia of World War II

Translated by Jesse Dillon
546pp. Macmillan. £15.
0 27196 401 5

These interesting and useful books guide an informative and interesting companion on his journeys by rail, and if he wants to know more about the lines he travels in the bibliography at the end of the book is a useful addition. Among the appendices is a table of railway fares, which gives the traveller an impression of the colour scene he might have witnessed from 1900 at a great junction like York or Carlisle.

Robert Goraliski begins his almanac with a chapter on the war in the Pacific, which was the year in which Japan launched an attack on China and the League of Nations called for a collective action to stop the sub-

In a very few years they will no longer have to grub about in the Reading Room working copy compiled from the index cards and the index cards themselves, part printed, part handwritten by scribes like the one active in the 1820s who painstakingly gave Mozart the Christian names "Johann Chrysostomus Wolfgang Amadeus", as indeed he was christened. It will be some time before we get to Mozart, for this first instalment ends with "Anderson (Hilding)", a New Yorker who in 1912 published a four-page song entitled "Take a Little Shove to me" with "Lyric by Collin Davis". The range "A-Anderson" includes none of the really great names of music, only second and third-raters. "Abel (Carl Friedrich)" is splendidly represented, with numerous original publications that must have been among the Museum's earliest acquisitions and with the most up-to-date complete edition by Walter Knappe (Cuxhaven, c 1960-78), but not very much in between - a silent commentary on changing attitudes to an interesting historical figure. With Albinoni the case is somewhat similar, but the valuable eighteenth-century editions are overwhelmingly outnumbered by those of the past twenty or thirty years. "Alberti (Domenico)" of the dreary basses - not to be confused with "Alberti (D.)" who published "Catching Butterflies" and "Lively tripping" in 1899 and went on, if he was the same (D.), to concoct a hard fantasia on *The Bohemian Girl* in 1914 - is represented in fewer than a dozen contemporary publications and by one surprising item, an "O Jesu salvator. For four-part chorus for mixed voices with piano or organ" published at Wendover, of all places, in 1977.

The fifteenth-century master Alexander Agricola has just three entries - the *Opera Omnia* in the *Corpus mensuralium musicarum* (1961-70); a priceless incommensurable, the bass part of the book of his Masses published by Petrucci in 1504; and a modern edition of a chanson in a contemporary lute arrangement. Monteverdi makes a premature appearance thanks to the inclusion of some pieces in the *Lusitania* (Giovanni Battista), "Allegri (Gregorio)" scores nineteen entries, of which fourteen - one might have guessed - are arrangements or de-rangements of his much too celebrated "Miserere". All these composers lumped together would still be outweighed by "Abt (Franz Wilhelm)". That dreary nineteenth-century German composer of songs and part-songs is the most richly represented in the whole volume, with thirty-seven pages. One wonders what relation he was, if

any, to poor "Abt (Max)" who follows him with a total of two songs. "My Laddie is gone" (two copies, London, 1877 and 1878) and "Plead thou my cause O Lord. Sacred song" (London, 1879).

"Adam (Adolphe Charles)" gets twelve pages - much more for a "Cantique pour Noël" which, like *Si l'étoile Roit*, takes up a whole page, than for *Giselle*. And two other rather dimmed figures may be considered together, not only because they are near neighbours but because both had British connections. "Albeniz (Isaac)" gets a whole column of twenty-four entries for his "Tango" but the items which catch the eye are his operas with English libretti, *King Arthur*, "a Trilogy of lyrical dramas founded on the Morte d'Arthur", *Peña Jimenez*, "a Lyric Comedy" (both with texts by F. B. Money-Coutts), and a "Comic Opera in two acts, written by A. Law". *The Magic Opal*. "Albert (Eugene Francis Charles d')" was born in Glasgow when his father "Albert (Charles Louis Napoleon d')" was pouring out quadrilles, galops and waltzes and up more than eight pages while the composer of *Tiefen* needs less than two.

The two Soviet Aleksandrov always cause trouble - one distinguished British lexicographer killed them both off in Berlin on the same day - and even in this almost immaculate bibliographical exercise Aleksandr Vasil'evich has been allowed to annex Anatoly Nikolaevich's "Cinqième sonata pour piano, Op. 22", although Anatoly Nikolaevich claims the sonata's "voryaya redaktsiya 1938" (in handsome Cyrillic type). Incidentally, transliteration when necessary is admirable and I cannot praise too warmly the decision to adopt the spelling "Chaiikovsky", with appropriate cross-references, for the composer of the "Pathétique" Symphony. One Soviet composer, Juhani Arvika, is in no need of transliteration - he is, or was, Estonian - but since such items as "Laulud Kodumaa, Valimik rahvalikke laule segakoorile" are likely to be sought only by his fellow-countrymen, explanation is perhaps unnecessary.

In his preface, Oliver Neighbour, the present Librarian, speaks of "an unfortunate notion that popular music did not merit the cost of cataloguing: from 1885 no entries were made for music judged to be ephemeral". However, "arsars have now been overtaken up to the year 1959" and the *Catalogue* is considerably brightened by such titles as "When the Crown up Ladies set the Jubilee" and "I always think I'm in heaven when I'm down in Disneyland" by my near-namesake "Abraham (Maurice)".

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PATRICK J. KEARNEY

With an Introduction by
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The eruptive moment

By David Hunt

C. DOUMAS (Editor):

There and the Aegean World
Papers and Proceedings of the
Second International Scientific Con-
gress held at Santorini, Greece,
August 1978.

Volume I, 823pp. Volume II, 480pp.
Available from La Haulle Books Ltd,
West Lodge, La Haulle, Jersey.
£57.50 the set. (Vol II only, £32).

There is the ancient and the official name of the southern-most island of the Cyclades, also known as Santorini, after its patron saint, St Irene of Salona. It would have long ago been counted as one of the seven wonders of the world if the ancients had thought anything but the sea from distance it looks like any other island but when you arrive you discover that you are sailing into the crater of a volcano. The encircling walls, broken at three points, rise sheer to a height of a thousand feet in places and beneath your feet the sea sinks almost as abruptly to depths of twelve hundred. In the centre of the ring smokes and activity; the most recent eruption was in 1950. Just three thousand five hundred years ago the greatest of them all took place. What had been a round island was torn into three smaller fragments. About ten cubic kilometres of rock, pulverized into ash, rose into the air. The centre of the land-mass fell into the deep caldera of the volcano. All the evidence of Thera's civilization was buried to an average depth of a hundred feet.

The two volumes under review owe their origin to Peter Nomikos, a patriotic Thera working in London, who organized a scientific congress held on the spot in August 1978. A hundred papers were prepared by various authors and the second volume concludes with a summary of the meetings at which they were discussed. There are contributions from almost all countries in Europe, from North America, Australasia and

Japan, by volcanologists, seismologists, palaeobotanists, palaeoclimatologists, historians and archaeologists. Illustrations are copious and well reproduced, especially those in colour.

Vulcanology is a stirring subject of study, especially to scientists from, for instance, Iceland and Japan, both of which countries are represented among the participants in the congress, together with the Planetary and Geophysical Volcanology Research Group of Budapest. In the other physical sciences there are numerous and evidently well-documented papers. But the unique thing about Thera is its place in history. The question is even raised by Professor Arne Furumark, of the University of Uppsala, whether the eruption radically altered the course of history and the entire pattern and character of Western civilization. The answer is, I think, in the negative; but I shall use the fact that the question can be asked as an excuse for concentrating on archaeology.

Here there are two points of interest: the nature of Thera's civilization at the time of the catastrophe and the question whether the eruption was the cause of the downfall of

Minoan Crete. On both points the story starts with the late Professor Marinatos, who put forward the Cretan theory in a notable article in *Antiquity* in 1939 and who in 1967 began the excavations at Akrotiri, on the south coast of Thera, which revealed a Late Minoan settlement in an astonishing state of preservation, covered by volcanic ash.

Marinatos's theory, which is supported here in an elegantly argued paper by the late Sir Denys Page, was based on the fact that the prosperous civilization of the eastern half of Minoan Crete came to a sudden end about 1450 BC. Palaces, towns and country mansions were not only destroyed but also abandoned. Since the date of eruption of Thera was calculated as at about the same epoch it was only too natural to connect the two events. The explosion was more violent than at Krakatoa; the north coast of Crete is only about eighty miles away. There must have been tidal waves (more modestly, *tsunamis*), perhaps poisonous gases, certainly a heavy fall of ash to destroy crops and fruit, and perhaps earthquakes. At the first conference in 1969 this was orthodox, with few heretics. By the time of the second it

was almost universally rejected. Marinatos's own excavations at Akrotiri had shown that the dates would not fit. There is nothing there later than Late Minoan IA, which ended c1500 BC. The physical scientists seem to concur. The depth of the ash-fall on Crete, put by Page at 30-50cm deep, is reduced by later calculations to 0.5-2cm. R. J. Blong, of Macquarie University, Australia, reduces the effect almost to the same level as the Chilean earthquake in the apocryphal *Times* headline. Few Cretans were killed, though there must have been many cases of conjunctivitis.

There is a possible compromise solution, based on an article by James Money in *Antiquity* in 1974. It is common ground that the eruption was preceded by an earthquake which seriously damaged Akrotiri and caused the flight of its inhabitants. If the interval between that and the eruption could be stretched to fifty years the conflict of dates would be solved; but the congress showed little inclination to adopt this theory.

The value of Thera's civilization has been notably demonstrated in the brilliant wall-paintings from houses in Akrotiri which now attract

so many admirers to the National Museum in Athens. The so-called "Spring fresco" with its little swallows, the fishermen with their catch, the young priestess, the man with the crocus and the most strikingly knock-about style of the painting are the work of a single hand. They are also the best of the well-known Cretan ones, and striking as the nautical scenes, which have given birth to numerous speculations about their significance. On one point the archaeologists appeared to agree: that the art of Thera, though strongly influenced by Crete, was a development of Cretan art in spirit rather than in the ritual paintings of Chios. The general view on the relations between the two is that Thera was an associate rather than a subject of Crete, and that there was an international trading centre, perhaps a medium republic.

Mr Nomikos is to be congratulated on the public spirit he has shown both in organizing the congress and in producing so learned and so well presented a record of its proceedings.

The plunging point

By James Howard-Johnston

ALFRED FRIENDLY:

The Dreadful Day

The Battle of Manzikert 1071
256pp. Hutchinson. £10.95.
0 09 143570 6

Throughout antiquity and the Middle Ages, the nomad peoples of the Eurasian steppes lowered over the Iranian and Balkan hinterlands in rich Mesopotamian and Mediterranean world. The endurance and military skills of nomad horse-archers could not be matched by cavalry raised in sedentary states, who were therefore always vulnerable to the

flexible tactics and rapid strategic movements of nomad armies. The Eurasian nomads thus posed a potential military threat, which was realized whenever gathered enough prestige and power to unite the tribes of a steppe region into a cohesive federation.

Alfred Friendly has written a history of one of the most dramatic nomad intrusions into the sedentary world, the Turkish conquest of the Near East in the middle decades of the eleventh century. He is disarmingly frank about the limitations of his knowledge and disarmingly modest in his aims. He merely hopes to act as a conduit between the great reservoir of scholarly learning and the general reading public.

He begins his book with an account of the rise of the Seljuk dynasty in

the steppes around the Aral Sea in the late tenth century (in a period of instability following the collapse of the major nomad power of the region, the Khazar federation), and of the Seljuk conquest of the Iranian plateau from Khurasan to Azerbaijan (1029-1044). He then focuses on the military confrontation between the new Turkish rulers of Iran and the Byzantine Empire which controlled Asia Minor and much of Armenia. He describes the sequence of raids launched westward (1045-1069) and the semi-independent Turkoman nomads from Azerbaijan, and the major expeditions led by the Seljuks, who were probably more interested in maintaining their prestige and authority over the segmentary society of the Turkomans than in acquiring Byzantine territory.

Finally, after a brief survey of the Byzantine counter-offensive in 1068-1070, he analyzes the military operations of 1071 which culminated in the battle of Manzikert. The Byzantine Emperor, Romanos IV Diogenes, took advantage of the Seljuk Sultan Alp Arslan's absence in northern Syria to attack the key strategic cities of Manzikert and Khilias, which controlled the approaches to Byzantine Armenia from Lake Urmia and the upper Tigris basin. Alp Arslan countered by a brilliant forced march north across the Kurdish Alps, succeeded in dividing the forward units from the main Byzantine army, tempted the Emperor into a full, orthodox engagement near Manzikert, and won a crushing victory. Mr Friendly views Manzikert as "a plunging point from which recovery proved to be impossible." Certainly within a generation the Turks would be firmly established on the plateau of Asia Minor, thus posing a direct threat to the rich coastlands and to the very existence of Byzantium; while the Turkish advance undoubtedly played a part in provoking the First Crusade.

The *Dreadful Day* is an enjoyable old-fashioned narrative history, which presents the main themes of scholarly research in a form palatable to the lay reader. It is, however, pity that Friendly has not enriched his narrative history with a more detailed and more evocative description of its geographical setting in the volcanic country of the Taurus and the Taurus. He occasionally indulges in a penchant for exaggeration and for the simplifying metaphor or simile. But his history is only open to two serious criticisms: first that too much emphasis is laid on the military, political and military decline of Byzantium in the eleventh century as a cause of Turkish success; second that the defensive strategy of Byzantium is misinterpreted. Since both faults of interpretation have been inherited from the work of pro-

fessional Byzantinists, it is they who deserve criticism rather than Mr Friendly.

Byzantinists have exaggerated the decline of the Byzantine army in numbers and fighting efficiency. The small gentry, who provided the cavalry backbone of the army, continued to exist as an independent economic, social and military group, although they became politically more dependent upon the great aristocratic clans of the provinces. The logical government in Constantinople had not set about reducing the size of the army by cutting its budget, either because successive rulers were too dissipated and debauched to run a military machine, or because the civilian officials were nervous of the potential political power of provincial military commanders. The Byzantine army was still a formidable fighting machine on the eve of Manzikert, even after the defeat. Its constituent parts were capable of fighting a major civil war. Byzantinists have been too ready to accept allegations of corruption, disaffection, budget-cutting and military decline, which were taken by Byzantine historians from a foreign genre of Byzantine literature: libellous and lampooning political pamphlets.

Byzantinists have also misinterpreted the defensive strategy adopted by the Byzantine general staff in the late 1060s. They have been misled by a somewhat bewildered civilian eyewitness, the historian Michael Attaliates, into believing that the Emperor Romanos IV Diogenes was applying the traditional guerrilla strategy of shadowing and harassing the enemy in 1068-1071. But the Emperor seems to have followed a more orthodox and more aggressive strategy. By a series of sweeping operations over the Armenian (and Cilician) marches he sought to reassert Byzantine political authority, strengthen the frontier regions, and along the main invasion routes, and probably to deepen the fortified frontier zone within which Byzantine troops could harass Turkoman raiding parties from secure bases. These offensive operations culminated in the 1071 attempt to destroy a major Seljuk field army at Manzikert in August 1071.

Alfred Friendly has then been too modest in his aims. He has not taken advantage of his position as an older scholar who has read the sources to re-examine the received opinions of Byzantinists. He has been too misled by them into seeking the explanation for the Turkish victory at Manzikert in the traditional military strength of nomadic armies. For this, he has successfully told the story of the first Turkish advance into the Mediterranean world.

Mobilizing the minds

By Andrew Sinclair

DAVID M. KENNEDY:

Over Here
The First World War and American Society
449pp. Oxford University Press.
£10.95.
0 19 502729 9

"If the war didn't happen to kill you," George Orwell wrote about the First World War, "it was bound to start you thinking." David M. Kennedy's *Over Here* starts you thinking about what happened to American society after the war. The value of the book lies in presenting the war as a peculiarly American affair. The mobilization of four million Americans, half of whom were sent to France, was by emotion and appeal. Fifty thousand doughboys may have been buried over there, but their souls went marching on.

The presentation of the First World War as a Great Crusade was mainly the work of George Creel and his Committee of Public Information. Professor Kennedy emphasizes that Creel was a progressive and a muckraker, who employed others of like mind such as Ida Tarbell and Ray Stannard Baker. They used the rhetoric developed to attack the gold-bugs and the trusts against the Huns and the Boches. 75,000 "Four-Minute Men" were recruited to deliver snappy speeches to any gathering met together to boost Americanism, while 250,000 self-elected patriots joined the American Protective League in order to snoop on their neighbors. With a Texan Attorney General and Postmaster General, who was accused by Norman Thomas of not knowing socialism from deism, the courts and censorship of the mail saw to the limiting of dissent. Progressivism was perverted to suppression, innovation now seemed seditious.

The crusade for democracy was launched by a push towards autocracy. Uniformity and standardization were necessary to produce a war machine. Herbert Hoover organized food distribution, Bernard Baruch the War Industries Board, Woodrow Wilson cosigned the draft as merely a selective system of service from a nation that had volunteered in mass. But, as Kennedy shrewdly asserts, the First World War was actually a passage between individualistic and collective

eras. Herbert Croly might pardon the dictatorial government by saying that it was using Hamiltonian means to Jeffersonian ends, but in point of fact, it was using the propaganda of liberty and choice to mask the realities of requisition and fiat.

Over Here is particularly good on the language and processes of the official doublespeak of America at war. Only a few feared compulsory military training as a government plot to Prussianize society, most saw it as an egalitarian measure to create a true melting-pot by "humbling the boys together". But black troops remained in segregated camps and were usually employed in menial laboring jobs. Moreover, the American Expeditionary Force's performance on the Western Front was glorified by the legendary individual exploits of Alvin C. York, who killed or captured nearly 150 Germans with his trusty Enfield, and Samuel Woodfill, who eliminated several German

machine-gun crews with his single-shot Springfield. Actually, General Pershing was an inexperienced commander, whose strategy of mobile attack in strength worked best at St Mihiel when directed at the backs of a retreating foe. When he was stopped by adequate German forces in the Argonne, he sacrificed the lives of tens of thousands of his men to the machine-guns as uselessly as any Haig. It was the extravagance of the Americans in men and material which impressed British officers, not their excellence.

Again Kennedy demonstrates his originality in insisting that the American Expeditionary Force provided more of a grand tour of France than a military experience. For the two million members of the force, the history and culture of that country changed their ways of thought. As the song went, "How are you gonna keep them down on the farm? Now that they've seen Paris?" The creation of the American Legion refined a nostalgia

for the war, when the New World seemed to have saved the old one. This change of consciousness was in contrast to the anger of the American writers who had served with European armies, particularly e.e. cummings, John Dos Passos and Ernest Hemingway. Kennedy contrasts their fury in their anti-war novels with the abstinence of Joseph Heller and Thomas Pynchon. To him, the difference in perception between the returned doughboys and the anti-war novelists was a further hole in the fabric of American culture, separating the intellectuals from the masses.

Finally, *Over Here* deals with the economic legacies of the war, which are better known: the shift of blacks from the South to the industrial opportunities of the North, and the change of America from a debtor to a creditor nation. Less well-known is the ruthlessness of the seizure of all German

ships, property and patents for the benefit of the American fleet and industry. By the time of the Armistice, America's chief trading rival, Britain, was beggared and its second, Germany, eliminated. To the Wilson cabinet, war seemed to be economics by other means.

Over Here is an important and engrossing book, only marred by an inexplicable prologue and occasional infelicities. In his first seven breathless pages, Kennedy whizzes through the European situation in 1917, from a grisly stalemate between lines of battle congealed in Flanders, yet drawing rivers of blood from each other, to Lenin, tense in his cramped lodgings in a Zurich shoemaker's house and waiting for the train to take him to the Finland Station. A "Labourite" is neither fish, nor a member of the Labour Party; and presumably "obscureling vorities" are fading truths.

The Confederacy's Gibraltar

By Esmond Wright

SAMUEL CARTER III:

The Final Fortress
The Campaign for Vicksburg 1862-1863
370pp. New York: St Martin's Press.
Distributed by Robson Books.
£12.50.
0 312 83926 X

Vicksburg, the City of a Hundred Hills, commands a great bluff above the Mississippi, midway between Memphis and New Orleans: as it swirls past, the river is half-a-mile wide. This is plantation country dotted with innumerable creeks and bayous. The city still retains more of the flavour of times past than most Southern cities. Indeed it exploits its story. Paddle-wheel steamers, their calliope playing, ply the river 250 feet or more below the escarpments, though they are now patronized exclusively by tourists; the court-house, with its four-faced clock on the cupola, still dominates the skyline, as the records in its Museum still, dominate its story; and a few antebellum homes survive.

The most impressive sight of all is the Vicksburg National Military Park, with earthworks and trenches and 132 cannon extending over 1,800 acres, 120 of which are a National Cemetery. Below the tenderly cared for green turf lie the remains of the 17,000 troops, 13,000 of them names, who gave their lives in 1862-63 to capture or to hold the greatest fortress of the Confederacy. As long as the South held it, and the 240 miles of the river down to Port Hudson, through the corridor grain and beef could reach it from across the river, from Louisiana and Texas. To Southern President Jefferson Davis, whose home was at Briarfield only twenty miles to the south, it was the "Gibraltar of the West". When it fell (and Briarfield was sacked), and the father of water again went unweaved to the sea, a gate was finally closed on any surviving chance of a Southern victory. On the same day as Grant entered the city, July 4, 1863, Lee was defeated at Gettysburg in Pennsylvania. That the South held on after that, and it held on for twenty-two months, is an indication of the depth of its faith in what was clearly then a lost cause.

Samuel Carter writes popular history, and is to be congratulated on his skill in doing so. For, though his highly readable, his book is based on the official evidence, the local press — notably *The Daily Whig*, whose last issues had to be printed on wall-paper — and on diaries and reminiscences, notably of Southern women trapped in the city under siege and living most of the final forty-seven days in caves dug out of the hills. This account is a warm tribute to the city, to its gallant but abused Pennsylvania-born defender — identifying (the author might have reminded us) with the South because Virginia was his wife's state — and to its conqueror, the moody, patient, whiskey-addicted but non-swearing Ulysses Simpson Grant.

Grant came to his success late. Though trained at West Point he had resigned his military career to avoid court-martial, failed in various business ventures, and was known as a heavy drinker. He won Lincoln's approval, however, for his achievement in taking Forts Henry and Donelson.

Grant's Vicksburg campaign is a textbook in which every device for reducing a fortress on a river can be studied: the use of railways, until Confederate cavalry led by Van Dorn and Bedford Forrest put

paid to them; the use of ironclads and rams to destroy Confederate shipping — until countered by Confederate devices which did serious damage to Federal ships; the use of mines and tunnels and canals — the river was later ironically to cut a channel of its own through the De Soto Peninsula on which Grant had one thousand blacks working unavailingly; the use of cavalry to destroy railway lines and stores, and to divert and baffle any Confederate forces coming to Vicksburg's assistance, while Grant crossed the Mississippi south of Vicksburg at Bruinsburg — and Colonel Benjamin Grierson became as skilful a cavalry commander as J. E. B. Stuart or Bedford Forrest (he covered 600 miles in sixteen days, and took 500 prisoners, destroyed fifty miles of railway and only lost twenty-six out of 900 men) and the tactic of "living off the country" which Grant used after crossing the river, and which Sherman was to develop in his march a year later from Atlanta to the sea. In its ruthlessness, devastation and savagery, total war started here, even if the moments of occasional gallantry and camaraderie are moving (notably during the two-hour truce to bury the dead after the battle of Champion's Hill). The story is told graphically, and even with hilarity in places, with its account of Admiral Porter battling the bayous and with his ships sailing through woods, and of the journey of the makeshift monitor, the *USS Cairo*, fuelled by tar-oakum, the "Turned Monster", proceeding downriver unmanned but putting the fear of God into the Vicksburg batteries and into all other craft on the river.

The hero of the book, however, is Ulysses Grant. He tried frontal assaults, the cutting of new channels, four drives through the bayous on the eastern bank of the river above Vicksburg before — in the end — driving south and crossing unopposed at Bruinsburg (April 30, 1863). He was spied upon by Secretary of War Stanton, and had a political soldier inflicted on him by the President: in the person of John Alexander "McClernand", from Illinois. His losses were appalling — as were Vicksburg's. At the decisive battle of the campaign, Champion's Hill (or to the Rebels "The Battle of Baker's Creek") on May 16, 1863, he lost 2,441 men killed, wounded or missing, out of 29,000; for Pemberton the figures were 3,840 out of 20,000. It was after the battle that he wrote on a three-day drunken "bender": "He [Pemberton] was a coward," he told a friend, "and in his opinion says that the frontal assault of May 22 and the final assault of the whole war at Cold Harbor (June 3, 1864) were those he regretted having ordered. His terms to Pemberton, as to Lee at Appomattox, were generous. He emerges from this vivid and valuable study as extremely stubborn, professional and human — but still very hard to like."

The Frankish time

By Steven Runciman

NICHOLAS CHEETHAM:

Medieval Greece
0 300 Yale University Press. £12.
0 300 02421 5

To turn Classicists there is something horrible about a people who called Athens "Salonica", Laodicea "La Crémone" and Thessalonica "Edine" and who covered the map of Hellas with names such as Bücelet, La Crémone and Malvoide; and devoted Byzantinists may agree with Patrick Leigh Fermor in resenting "the distant echoes of horns and Burgundian hounds along the ravines of Achala". But among the easier-going lovers of Greece there are many to whom the Frankish period provides a romantic enrichment to her history. It is for them that Sir Nicholas Cheetham has written this book. He rightly remarks that apart from Renauld "Rodd's" *The Princess of Achala* and *Chronicles of the Middle Ages*, there has been no history written in English on the Frankish Greece. His aim is to fill the gap with a work suitable for the general educated public, that will not enrage "the reader in a too fearsome labyrinth of names, dates and events".

He achieves this aim. This is not a book of profound scholarship based on original research. The facts that it contains can all be found in William Miller's great work, supplemented by A. Boni's *Le Morée franque* and the two volumes of D. Zakythinos's *La*

Despotat grec du Morée, and a few other more peripheral works. But Sir Nicholas's synthesis is wise and fair-minded; and he has added his own interesting reflections on the cultural contacts between the Franks and the Greeks. Whether the book is as intelligible as it is intelligent is perhaps more doubtful. It is impossible to tell a simple story about what Gibbon, whom he sadly quotes, called "the obscure and various dynasties that rose or fell on the continent or in the isles". There are too many threads, and so many names still, that it is sometimes hard at first to see to whom the pronoun "he" belongs. Like William Miller before him, Sir Nicholas has given the Duchy of the Archipelago a separate chapter, and separate chapters also to Venetian Greece and to Crete.

The story is full of colourful and entertaining incidents. It is said that he misses, on the "two vivid personal touches" he does not tell us that William of Villehardouin, was captured after the battle of Pelagonia when in disguise, because he was recognized by his prominent teeth. On the other hand, he includes the story of Geoffrey Cheating, the Champion's Hill, who came out to secure the inheritance, though it is full of inconsistencies and there is no proof that Robert of Champlitte ever existed. One of two minor points also need correction. Lalande of Crete was delighted by Byzantium when he arrived there. It was only when he took against it, that he was considered an infidel. Lalande of Crete was a considerable intellectual centre before the days of Manuel Comnenus, and the bishop Nicephorus Moschopoulos and

the Abbot Pachomius had brought artists there early in the fourteenth century; and we know of an intellectual friend of Demetrius Cydones who planned to settle there in the early 1340s. Ptolemy only spent a few years in Adriaupole, studying under a Jew with Zoroastrian tastes, and was already lecturing in Constantinople when the Emperor decided that it would be wiser to move him further away from the shocked circles of the Patriarchate. It is not true to say that the Palaeologues, from the Emperors downward, "regularly married Latin women." John V's wife was Greek, Manuel II's Serbian, and John VIII had a Russian and a Greek wife, as well as a hideously plain Italian of Greek descent.

Sir Nicholas's comments on Greco-Frankish relations are wise and rather negative. In fact the two civilizations had very little effect on each other. The Morée, except perhaps architecturally — the palace at Mistra was more like an Italian than a Byzantine palace, and indeed, its core was a Frankish building — and artistically, as can be seen on one or two lay Greek manuscripts, intellectual contacts were made between the Greeks and the Italians, not the Greeks and the Franks. In all judgments, Sir Nicholas shows little insight and good sense, as when he points out the seriously shoddy construction of the Frankish castles in Greece, in comparison with those in Syria and Palestine.

It is not a little unfair to say that there have been no distinguished Greek scholars from King Minda and El Greco? The verdict will not please the Venetians.

Styles of settlement

By Peter Marshall

T.H. BREEN:

Myne Owne Ground
Change and Persistence in Early Colonial America
286pp. Oxford University Press. £10.
0 19 502728 0

T.H. BREEN and STEPHEN INNES:
Myne Owne Ground
Race and Freedom on Virginia's Eastern Shore, 1640-1676
240pp. Oxford University Press.
£12.50.
0 19 502722 2

As an essayist, T.H. Breen makes a book go a long way. That does not mean that he provides a collection of superficial studies for his investigator. He is firmly supported by his sharp analysis to his determination to extract a degree of clarity from the evidence that more than one scholar would consider too complex to permit the drawing of conclusions. A striking example of his resources to a technique that is both subtle and powerful, in less than 100 pages he has written a book that is as good as a book, written by a scholar of the New World, the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and the experience of Charles I, not of the frontier, produced the covenanted

English migration to the colony rests upon the analysis of two lists, prepared in 1637 at Sandwich, and Great Yarmouth, which contained details of 273 passengers. These groups, a distinctly random sample of the fifteen to twenty thousand who left for New England in the decade before the Civil War, are nevertheless traced with sufficient assurance to establish "in outline the character of one form of migrant, the urban artisan of Puritan leaning". The pleasure of participating in a convincing process of investigation may, however, deflect attention from the weight of its findings: while it is no doubt correct to declare that "Conceivably this group of migrants may have been atypical, at this stage have research it is not really possible to define what was typical and what was atypical. This much can be said, however, there is no obvious indication that the 1637 group is unique. It is hard to resist the conclusion that such a judgement is appropriate, scholarly, and determined to have it all ways."

In any event, other essays stress the significance of the circumstances of departure as factors which, more emphatically than the new environment, contributed to the "persistent localism" which distinguished the communities of Massachusetts. Recent events in England are linked to the form of colonial institutions: experience of Charles I, not of the frontier, produced the covenanted

millie of the settlement. In establishing relationships between the conditions of Stuart England and the reasons of the migrants Professor Breen displays an impressive familiarity with recent historical studies on both sides of the Atlantic. He does, however, create rather too many English cities.

Other essays examine Virginia and Virginians, and encourage a discussion of themes which contrast markedly with those discerned in Puritan society. The growth of the Southern colony is seen to progress from individual materialism to stratified subordination and the stages by which this major shift of attitude and structure comes about are well worth description and evaluation. Naturally much interest resides in the contentions of the development of racial attitudes. Professor Breen does not consider negro inferiority to have become an habitual condition until after Bacon's Rebellion in 1676 since some blacks enjoyed legal and social relations with their fellow white

landowners. "Myne Owne Ground" considers this phase of relative freedom in a monograph that touches on both more and less historical problems than the reader might be prepared to encounter. On the one hand the discussion of the role and status of free Black planters takes place in the setting of county government and society on the other, the area in question was physically separated by

A transatlantic correspondence

V. F. Calverton (1900-1940) was a prominent American Marxist critic and editor of *The Modern Quarterly*. Throughout the 1920s he submitted various manuscripts and proposals for articles to T. S. Eliot's *The Criterion*: to be published by Eliot was Calverton's fondest ambition. Eliot delegated the correspondence to Herbert Read, then Assistant Keeper at the Victoria and Albert Museum, who served as Eliot's unofficial associate on *The Criterion*. Read was less categorical than Eliot in his rejection of the sociological Marxist criticism which Calverton learned from Georg Plekhanov, but his doubts, spelled out in a series of letters now among the V. F. Calverton papers in the New York Public Library, were substantial. Read also took the occasion of his correspondence with Calverton to state in a characteristically succinct and emphatic manner his views on aesthetics and other matters in this period.

The following selections have been made from nineteen letters Read sent to Calverton between 1924 and 1930, and are reprinted by permission of Mr Benedict Read on behalf of the Herbert Read Discretionary Trust, and by Mr Donald Anderle, Associate Director for Special Collections, V. F. Calverton Papers, Rare Books and Manuscripts Division, The New York Public Library (Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations).

Eric Homberger

December 5, 1924

I was extremely interested in your essay on Sherwood Anderson [in *The Modern Quarterly*, Fall 1924]. It is the best piece of work of yours I have seen yet and goes far to justify my method... *The Criterion* I have to make amounts to this: that no science—sociology, psychology or whatever—is sufficient in itself as a basis for criticism. A particular science may be the best approach to a particular subject: I think this is true of the sociological approach to Sherwood Anderson. But generally philosophy in the sense of a synthesis of all the sciences is the only secure basis. I don't mean anything mystical (I should be severer than you in dealing with that element in Anderson) and of course I admit that everything has some physical basis. But to analyse it is not always to understand it.

But I would never call myself a Bergsonian: I don't like that attitude at all. I stand by the English empirical school. I feel their spirit in my very bones and anything new will for me be a development of that great tradition. My ambition is to relate literary criticism in some way with that tradition.

January 2, 1925

I saw Eliot last night & spoke to him about your proposal for an article on the New American Literature. He was quite interested & would like to see your essay, but naturally does not want to commit himself in advance. He asked me if I thought you would be drastic enough with Sherwood Anderson & Sinclair Lewis.

June 13, 1925

[In reply to Calverton's *The New Spirit: A Sociological Criticism of Literature*] As to the purpose & nature of sociological criticism, I think we are quite in agreement. Where I think I disagree is in making it an all-inclusive instrument. I believe that aesthetic values are more complex than you make out. That in general they are relative & important may be granted. But the aesthetic value of a particular work of art may be composed of several elements whose permanency is a matter of degree. I think there is one element which is as far as anything human can be: permanent & absolute.

Idea, and to a lesser extent feelings & sentiments, are subject to change. They go out of fashion, become dead, and so far as aesthetic value they are dependent on ideas & feelings: they are impermanent. (Some people would go so far as to deny that aesthetic

values can ever be dependent on ideas & subjective feeling. I don't agree.) But things are not subject to the same degree of flux & in so far as art is the objective presentation of the beauty of things, it is to that extent virtually independent of sociological developments.

I say "beauty of things," but I don't mean any emotional reaction. I am prepared to believe that art can make anything beautiful, merely by the formal organisation of its qualities. I should be inclined to include, not merely inanimate objects, events & so on, but all universal concepts, in the Aristotelian sense. I am prepared to find that these can be reduced to very few—such apparently universal emotions as maternal love have undoubtedly changed with sociological conditions. But most concepts arising out of instincts can, I think be regarded as universal.

To sum up: I think that there can be, & that there does in fact exist a small body of art that is impersonal, objective, timeless; that this is even the pure type of art; & that sociological criticism must moderate its claims when confronted with this kind of art

September 27, 1925

If we pursued it, I think I should probably demur at your concept of progress. You seem to have a conviction, on which perhaps your socialism is based, of the inevitability of progress. Again we must be relative. I see no reason, in known history or experience, to warrant such a faith. Evolution no doubt teaches us that man has evolved from the amoeba: but over millions of years which are absolutely meaningless to us. In the ten thousand years of which we have some partial knowledge, there is nothing to experience but a checked career of no certain rhythm & of no final result. We live in the present & although we can learn a little from the past & see a very little into the future, relatively we are creatures of the present and the only sane philosophy is one that recognises this fact.

The Criterion (I tell you this in confidence) may after this next number, disappear or suffer a "sea-change". The change will be, I think, for the good—away from patronage, towards liberty. But Eliot has been very ill & I have had no detailed discussion with him yet.

November 31, 1925

I met with [J. M.] Robertson for the first time a few weeks ago & had a great talk with him. I agree with you: he is a

great critic—much greater than is commonly appreciated. His essays on Coleridge & Poe are masterly—equal to any criticism in the language. And he is a very charming personality, genial & encouraging & without the least conceit.

The last number of *The Modern Quarterly* [Winter 1925] was the best you have produced... I think you deal admirably & bravely with Mencken & [Stuart P.] Sherman. Mencken is the only one of your subjects who really counts as a force in England, & largely because, as well as his vaudeville features, we recognise in him a certain representative value. He is American & not a weak academic reflection of a European. This I think you recognise—and rightly criticise... I should like to see you devoting more space to experimental writers like Gertrude Stein. My complaint against the English socialists has always been that they were revolutionists in politics alone. *The Herald*, the *New Leader* & such papers are simply stupid in anything that concerns modern art or literature—quite impervious & obstinate about it. This was one of the causes of my disillusionment.

December 22, 1925

Eliot's long illness has been a terrible setback for us, but we hope to go forward with renewed energy next year.

March 6, 1926

I don't think it is any use disguising the fact that there is a fundamental opposition between your point of view and Eliot's. You stand for a proletarian spirit which he simply does not accept in any way, or regard as anything but the contrary of the cultural values he believes in. You will have your own reaction to that, but as a fact you must accept it. I too have had my doubts of your position, though I don't think that your view is a direct reflex of the break-up of bourgeois society (and it is some such statement that you do make towards the conclusion of one of the essays) then I feel that your conception of a sociological criticism has run away with itself and involved you in absurdities. I grow more and more convinced that aesthetic values are independent of social values, & that all that your method reaches is the unessential husk of literature—the fashions and trills and never the eternal values: *Eternal*—times, and in its usual context, I do too. But what I am sure of is that all that deserves the name of art endures, if only for a few minds, beyond the

temporal circumstances of its origin and immediate currency...

Namesakes

My namesakes, the children of James Moore—Alfred, Marianne, Esther, George, Levy, Mark, Walter, Ann, and Ellen—

who, in 1860, together erected (though George was the moving spirit) this weighty, fortified stone, seem to have made

more fuss of the dying of their prolific father than their next-door neighbours, the Reifs, made of burying

Robert Reif, who departed this life on December 15th 1884, on four years after him, Mary Ann Reif, his wife.

Despite these losses, it's Reif, not Moore I write for. I'm a Reif, unfussy death, and that's my gift of rhyming with oneself.

Hubert Moore

temporal circumstances of its origin and immediate currency...

February 20, 1929

[In reply to Calverton's *The Bankruptcy of Marriage*] The tendency towards the disruption of marriage as a social institution is undoubtedly in full force: but where will it land us? Companionate marriage & communal life—that is a brave adventure & I see nothing wrong in principle. But what I do rather value—not only personally, but as a foundation of social well-being—is that intangible factor which one might call intimacy or *Gemütslichkeit* which the old order of things did give in most cases. If you destroy the stability of marriage you destroy the home, & with that you destroy a social & educational nucleus which frankly I do not see being replaced by anything in the new order of things. You cannot base a society on the fluctuating desires of the individual: at some stage a common order must intervene—a law that is greater than the individual & which subordinates the individual for the good of society. A marriage bond, indissoluble in all but exceptional circumstances, is such a law. It is made for society & not for the individual. The individual suffers, but society gains...

I have these last few days been helping with the translation of what I think is by far the best war book to appear so far: *Im Westen Nichts Neues* [All Quiet on the Western Front], by E. M. Remarque, a young German author. Putnam's here sent it to me to read & I urged them strongly to publish a translation. In my opinion it is much finer than Barbusse's books & will last for all time as an authentic record of the experiences of the men who suffered most. It is terrible, but also beautiful. In Germany, where it was published on Jan. 31, it sold 70,000 copies in the first week.

August 8, 1930

But you must realize, if you have followed Eliot's trend of late, that the kind of criticism you represent becomes more and more antipathetic to him. I myself, as you realize, am by no means a partisan to your theories; the article (which Read proposed to write about Calverton) will be critical enough. But there are so many other things that Eliot wants me to do, that he would only consent with a bad grace to giving up his precious space to this particular subject.

There is not, of course, the slightest suggestion of personal bias in all this. In confidence I may say that there has been the same kind of difficulty about some interesting critical work submit-

ted to *The Criterion* by the Marxist critic [Boris] Eichengram. We wouldn't expect the Pope to give imprimatur to an exposition of Marxism, and that is about what it amounts to.

August 23, 1934

I was very impressed by the Raphael's book on *Proudhon* [sic] *Picasso*. [It is] the most convincing application of the Marxist method I have ever read.

I don't think I have made up my mind about Auden & Spender. I like them both well, and they are both very good poets. Yes—Spender is a poet somewhere; Auden might end as a dramatist, or even as a politician. But let us wait till they are in their thirties.

December 14, 1934

[In reply to Calverton's *The Power of the Gods*] Though I am not religious, and never likely to be, nevertheless I believe in the reality of a cosmic *Innerlichkeit*, an individual intuition of truth which is beyond and above science. I find the evidence of it much in aesthetic experience, but it is in art experience. It is the one fact that keeps me from becoming a complete Marxist. I am too good an anarchist.

February 20, 1937

The last chapter [of *Art and Society*] will give you my political position—in a position. Actually it is an avowal of a position. Socialist, of course, and even Communist; but not Stalinist and not Trotskyist. To tell you the truth, I feel more sympathy for the Spanish anarchists than for any other body of political thought. I suppose my idealism will always prevent me from being anything but an unwilling prisoner in any regimented crew. I am not proud of my isolation, but feel inevitable... *The Modern Monthly* arrives fairly regularly, and I always read it with interest. I think its latest format is the best you have had, and hope it is finding a good sized public. The *Left Review* is the nearest thing to it here, but that is more or less orthodox Stalinist, of course. Your particular point of view hardly exists in this country.

November 29, 1939

...we are creeping about in the dark with little dim torchlight. Intellectually as well as actually. Practically every magazine of any interest has closed down and literature and the arts are crowded out of the few papers that survive. Some brave souls—Cyril Connolly and Stephen Spender—are starting a new magazine as a sort of protest against this intellectual blackout, but I don't know what it is to be like—it is to be called *HORIZON*.

As for the war—I had better say too much if I want this letter to reach you. But my attitude is really one of fatalistic acquiescence. It seems to me to be futile to oppose it actively: the only playing into the hands of the sun and Stalinists. And the longer it goes on the more chance there is of some revolutionary change in Germany. As you know, it's a lot of bloody cant. It's just the death agony of the capitalist system. So let it go on till there's a kick left in the old corpse. Meanwhile a new life has to be started somewhere.

1. John Mackinnon Robertson (1886-1933): self-educated radical polymath, free-thinker, scholar, lecturer, orientalist. Liberal MP 1906-18. T. S. Eliot's essay "Hamlet" and "His Problem" (1919) was written as a review of Robertson's *The Problem of Hamlet*. He was a regular contributor to *The Criterion* and, from 1926, to Calverton's *Modern Quarterly*.
2. Putnam's translation of *Im Westen Nichts Neues* is credited to A. W. Wheen.
3. Eichengram (1886-1939): literary critic, professor at the Institute of Art History, Leningrad. A member of the Society for the Study of Poetic Language. Eichengram was a leading figure in the Formalist School.

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

Interpreting the irruption

By Peter Hebblethwaite

EDWARD SCHILLEBEECKX

The Christian Experience in the Modern World. SCM Press, £19.50. 0 334 00173 0

On November 14 last, Edward Schillebeeckx, professor at the Catholic University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands, was sixty-six. I mention this for two reasons. First he has retained his post at the University beyond the usual retiring age of sixty-five because of difficulties about his successor (the faculty is prepared to consider an exception, the Vatican is not). Secondly Schillebeeckx is evidently determined, before retiring from the scene, to complete a great work which will be his *Summa Christiana*. *Jesus* (published by Collins) was Volume one; *Christ* is Volume two; and the third volume, *The Holy Spirit in the Church*, is well on the way.

From the very succession of titles one can begin to grasp that Schillebeeckx was perfectly honest when he told the assessors of the Roman Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, who had challenged his authority that his work could not be judged until it was completed. *Res coronat opus*. They had before them only *Jesus*, which was probably not, as the unfortunate subtitle in the English translation suggested, "an experiment in Christology". It was, rather, a historical work which endeavoured, through a rigorous return to the sources, to re-establish the link, broken by Babel, between the "Jesus" of

history and the "Christ" of faith. That there was someone known as "Jesus of Nazareth" who existed at a particular time and place, taught a doctrine of the over-riding Kingdom of God, lived in intimate relationship with God whom uniquely he called by the Aramaic term *Abba*, was crucified under Pontius Pilate and was held to have "risen from the dead"—all this was established by the first volume.

The purpose of the second volume is to show how the early Church responded to this historical experience and how it "thematized" its claims. The response was an interpretation of the life of Jesus in terms of the Jewish hope for a Messiah, a Saviour, the One who was to come, the Son of God, the "Second Adam". Consequently there is a clear methodological shift between the two books. *Jesus* sought out the historical bedrock (Schillebeeckx likes geological metaphors) which could be relied upon, and which would be the basis of Jesus could really be assigned to him. *Christ* asks how people who saw in Jesus an irruption of the divine into human history tried to make sense of their astonishing experience and how we, today, can seek to make sense of a comparable experience. Whereas *Jesus* laid the foundations for a Christology it did not develop, laying particular emphasis on the neglected strand of the Synoptics, *Christ* tackles the whole of the New Testament canon and inquires what the earliest Christian documents had to say about "Jesus, who is the Lord".

It would be ludicrous to try to say more in a brief review. Though Schillebeeckx is not a professional New Testament scholar, he appears to have mastered the available material as completely as anyone

can hope to—and kept his head in the process. There are dozens of individual judgments that could, and surely will, be quibbled about. He chooses to treat I and II Timothy with Jude and II Peter. That distances the four epistles very properly from Paul, but seems almost to create a new author or a new "source". Sometimes his treatment of the Old Testament seems abrupt, though few would wish that he had written a still longer book. But short of going over the whole ground again—a decade's work—it is difficult to fault his exegesis or his main interpretative scheme.

If the assessors of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith are going through *Christ* with a fine tooth-comb they will find little to object to: the Christology they deemed lacking in the first volume is here abundantly provided. They have already conceded that the answers Schillebeeckx gave in his December 1979 "colloquy" are "satisfactory". They may still have further questions about how the "high" Christology of the New Testament, so masterfully displayed here, is to be related to the decisions of the early Councils and the subsequent life of the Church. The simple answer is that they must wait patiently for Volume three. Another answer, that can already be given, is found in the epilogue of *Christ* where Schillebeeckx, true to his conviction that the experience of God is best expressed in prayer and praise, offers us a creed, a eucharistic prayer and a version of the *Magnificat*. It will be a solace for the Roman Congregation to learn that Schillebeeckx, when not engaged in theological controversy, is at home busily praying.

The personal point of view

By Don Cupitt

PETER HINCHLIFF and DAVID YOUNG

The Human Potential. Christian Faith as an Approach to the Everyday Reality of this World. 100pp. Darton, Longman and Todd. £3.50. 0 23 51501 8

In an interview in 1963 the painter Francis Bacon said that "Man now realises that he is an accident, a comedy, a fumble, a mistake. Not many people would put the point so starkly, but the notion is widespread that since Pagan times the progress of natural science has confirmed his fears: with a nature too flawed and a consciousness too highly-strung for any easy happiness, man drifts apparently alone in an immeasurably vast and alien Universe which offers nothing for him, which he must enter by a series of chances, and which (unless he destroys himself first, because one too probable) will eventually annihilate him and all he holds dear."

Bacon and Russell, in a rhetorical passage, declared that this view of the human predicament must be the basis of any credible human philosophy of life, but few, if any, Western religious writers have as yet openly taken their stand on "the grim, foundation of everything human". Nevertheless it is a view that has been a modern religious writer's dilemma: the need to transcend the precarious confidence in the personal and in human values. The predicament is a useful ambiguity of our condition. The modern English theologian, John Macquarrie, presents Christianity as a "book of being personally involved in the world of existence, at a level deeper than the merely material" and which can "escape from

the fear that he is a lonely and meaningless figure in a hostile, or at best impersonal, world".

A series of quotations will indicate the book's standpoint. Reality is not wholly mechanical; for at least there is man himself, and "man is the fullest expression of the personhood that is at the heart and core of all existence". God is not to be seen as a transcendent "spiritual being wholly other than, and existing independently of, the physical universe". Instead, belief in God is "the claim that all existence has a personal basis or core". "God is the personhood for whom the universe is a continually unfolding vehicle". So there is an analogy between man and the cosmos, microcosm and macrocosm, God being to the world what man is to the human body; but this analogy should not be understood in a dualistic sense, for "material existence and God" are "continuous with one another". Faith is "to build one's life around the (rich possibilities) suggested by our own personhood". The answer to evil can only be practical: it is to struggle "alongside God in the overcoming of evil and suffering. As for the incarnation, "to say that Christ is God and man is to say that the core of everything that is human is to be expressed in human personhood in Jesus of Nazareth". Prayer is not so much a matter of "asking God for things" as rather "a way of encountering the world" and "coming to terms with reality".

What evidence are we offered for the truth of this rather Hegelian form of theism? The authors think that some form of "Design Argument" might be valid, but their main appeal is to its general conformity with experience and its morally valuable effects. However, they are reluctant to speak of God as an individual distinct from the world, of experience, and one is left

with the suspicion that God is an existentially valuable metaphor, an "as-if". The account of religious thought offered by many social anthropologists (Godfrey Lienhardt for example) comes to mind here. By personifying the inscrutable powers that control human destiny, man is enabled to rise above the passive endurance of futility. He can think his situation, collaborate with the powers, and better his lot. So there are resemblances and continuities between primitive and modern religious thought, as no doubt we would expect.

There are some difficulties in the account of Christ given in the book, for it is said that "a cultural shift... seems to have put Jehovah out of the reach of men who explain their history and environment in ways very different from those accessible to a first-century mind"; and it is also said that there is no way of getting back to the historical Jesus, because history and myth, fact and interpretation, are inextricably intertwined in the New Testament. Yet in spite of these difficulties we are told that the New Testament "seems to present a reliable picture of the kind of person Jesus was", and the authors go on to give detailed accounts of Jesus's life and character. They seem to be torn between the liberal protestantism which appeals to the "man Jesus", and the catholic modernism which admits that we have little or no objective knowledge of the historical Jesus and is prepared to accept the New Testament as a total symbolic package, continually reinterpreted, by the Church.

Finally, one might criticize an account of Christian faith which is so heavily committed to reassuring us and promising us that we are not alone; the personhood becomes "stifling". The religious life has other dimensions, some harsh and tragic, some severe and strenuous and some cool and austere, which are not mentioned here.

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